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OF THE
EARTH
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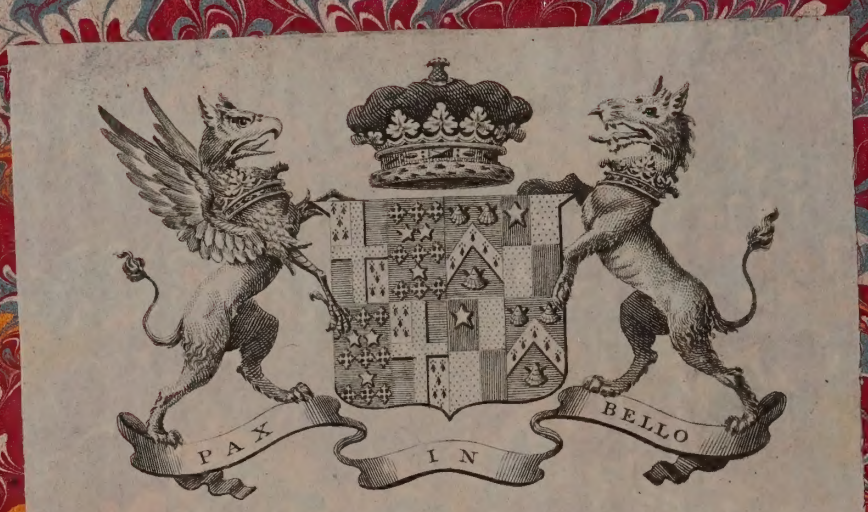

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A

REVIEW

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OF THE

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And of its

PROOFS:

ESPECIALLY

IN REFERENCE TO

SCRIPTURE.

LONDON,

Printed by *R. Norton*, for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Biſhop's-Head in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard. 1690.

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A REVIEW OF THE THEORY OF THE EARTH.

TO take a review of this Theory of the Earth, which we have now finiſh'd; We muſt conſider, firſt, the extent of it: and then the principal parts whereof it conſiſts. It reaches, as you ſee, from one end of the World to the other: From the firſt Chaos to the laſt day, and the Conſummation of all things. This, probably, will run the length of Seven Thouſand Years: which is a good competent ſpace of time to exerciſe our thoughts upon, and to obſerve the ſeveral Scenes which Nature and Providence bring into View within the compaſs of ſo many Ages.

The matter and principal parts of this Theory, are ſuch things as are recorded in Scripture. We do not feign a Subject, and then deſcant upon it, for diverſion; but endeavour to give an intelligible and rational account of ſuch matters of Fact, paſt or future, as are there ſpecified and declar'd. What it hath ſeem'd good to the Holy Ghoſt to communicate to us, by Hiſtory or Prophecy, concerning the ſeveral States and general Changes of this Earth, makes the Argument of our Diſcourſe. Therefore the Things themſelves muſt be taken for granted, in one ſence or other: ſeeing, beſides all other proofs, they have the

authority of a Revelation; and our buſineſs is only to give ſuch an explication of them, as ſhall approve it ſelf to the faculties of man, and be conformable to Scripture.

We will therefore firſt ſet down the things themſelves, that make the ſubject matter of this Theory: and remind you of our explication of them. Then recollect the general proofs of that explication, from reaſon and nature: but more fully and particularly ſhew how it is grounded upon Scripture. The primary *Phænomena* whereof we are to give an account, are theſe Five or Six.

I. *The original of the Earth from a Chaos.*
II. *The ſtate of Paradiſe, and the Ante-diluvian World.*
III. *The Univerſal Deluge.*
IV. *The Univerſal Conflagration.*
V. *The Renovation of the World, or the New Heavens and New Earth.*
VI. *The Conſummation of all things.*

Theſe are unqueſtionably in Scripture: and theſe all relate, as you ſee, to the ſeveral forms, ſtates, and revolutions of this Earth. We are therefore oblig'd to give a clear and coherent account of theſe Phænomena, in that order and conſecution wherein they ſtand to one another.

There are alſo in Scripture ſome other things, relating to the ſame Subjects, that may be call'd the ſecondary ingredients of this Theory, and are to be referr'd to their reſpective primary heads. Such are, for inſtance,

I. *The Longevity of the Ante-diluvians.*
II. *The Rupture of the Great Abyſs, at the Deluge.*
III. *The appearing of the Rainbow after the Deluge: as a ſign that there never ſhould be a ſecond Flood.*

Theſe things Scripture hath alſo left upon record: as directions and indications how to underſtand the Ante-diluvian ſtate, and the Deluge it ſelf. Whoſo-

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ever therefore ſhall undertake to write the Theory of the Earth, muſt think himſelf bound to give us a juſt explication of theſe ſecondary Phænomena, as well as of the primary; and that in ſuch a dependance and connexion, as to make them give and receive light from one another.

This part of the Task is concerning the World behind us, Times and Things paſs'd, that are already come to light. The remainder is concerning the World before us, Times and Things to come: that lie yet in the boſome of Providence, and in the ſeeds of Nature. And theſe are chiefly the *Conflagration* of the World, and the *Renovation* of it. When theſe are over and expir'd, then *comes the end*, as S. *Paul* ſays. 1 *Cor.* 15. Then *the Heavens and the Earth fly away*, as S. *John* ſays. *Apoc.* 20. Then is the *Conſummation* of all things, and the laſt period of this ſublunary World, whatſoever it is. Thus far the Theoriſt muſt go, and purſue the motions of Nature, till all things are brought to reſt and ſilence. And in this latter part of the Theory, there is alſo a collateral Phænomenon, the *Millennium*, or Thouſand years Reign of Chriſt and his Saints, upon Earth, to be conſider'd. For this, according as it is repreſented in Scripture, does imply a change in the Natural World, as well as in the Moral: and therefore muſt be accounted for, in the Theory of the Earth. At leaſt it muſt be there determin'd, whether that ſtate of the World, which is ſingular and extraordinary, will be before or after the Conflagration.

Theſe are the Principals and Incidents of this Theory of the Earth, as to the matter and ſubject of it: which, you ſee, is both important, and wholly taken out of Scripture. As to our explication of theſe points, that is ſufficiently known, being ſet down at large in four Books of this Theory. Therefore it remains only, having ſeen the matter of the Theory, to examine the Form of it, and the proofs of it: for from theſe two things it muſt receive its cenſure. As to the form, the characters of a regular Theory ſeem to be theſe three; *Few and eaſie Poſtulatums: Union of Parts*: and *a Fitneſs to anſwer, fully and clearly, all the Phænomena to which it is to be apply'd.* We

We think our Hypotheſis does not want any of theſe Characters. As to the Firſt, we take but one ſingle *Poſtulatum* for the whole Theory: and that an eaſie one, warranted both by Scripture and Antiquity: Namely, *That this Earth riſe, at firſt, from a Chaos.* As to the ſecond, *Union of parts*, The whole Theory is but one Series of Cauſes and Effects from that firſt Chaos. Beſides, you can ſcarce admit any one part of it, firſt, laſt, or intermediate, but you muſt, in conſequence of that, admit all the reſt. Grant me but that the Deluge is truly explain'd, and I'le deſire no more for proof of all the Theory. Or, if you begin at the other end, and grant the *New Heavens and New Earth* after the Conflagration, you will be led back again to the firſt Heavens and firſt Earth that were before the Flood. For St. *John* ſays, that *New Earth* was without a *Sea: Apoc.* 21. 1. And it was a *Renovation*, or *Reſtitution* to ſome former ſtate of things: there was therefore ſome former Earth without a Sea; which not being the preſent Earth, it muſt be the Ante-diluvian. Beſides, both St. *John*, and the Prophet *Iſaias*, have repreſented the New Heavens and New Earth, as *Paradiſiacal*; According as is prov'd, *Book the 4th. ch.* 2. And having told us the form of the New-future-Earth, that it will have *no Sea*, it is a reaſonable inference that there was no Sea in the *Paradiſiacal Earth.* However from the form of this Future Earth, which St. *John* repreſents to us, we may at leaſt conclude, That an *Earth without a Sea* is no Chimæra, or impoſſibility: but rather a fit ſeat and habitation for the Juſt and the Innocent.

Thus you ſee the parts of the Theory link and hold faſt one another: according to the ſecond character. And as to the third, of being *ſuited to the Phænomena*, we muſt refer that to the next head, of *Proofs.* It may be truly ſaid, that bare coherence and union of parts is not a ſufficient proof; The parts of a Fable or Romance may hang aptly together, and yet have no truth in them. This is enough indeed to give the title of a juſt Compoſition to any work, but not of a true one: till it appear that the concluſions and explications are grounded upon good natural evidence,

or

or upon good Divine authority. We muſt therefore proceed now to the third thing to be conſider'd in a Theory, *What* its Proofs are: or the grounds upon which it ſtands, whether Sacred or Natural.

According to Natural evidence, things are proved from their Cauſes or their Effects. And we think we have this double order of proofs for the truth of our Hypotheſis. As to the method of Cauſes, we proceed from what is more ſimple, to what is more compound: and build all upon one foundation. Go but to the Head of the Theory, and you will ſee the Cauſes lying in a train before you, from firſt to laſt. And tho' you did not know the Natural hiſtory of the World, paſt or future, you might, by intuition, foretell it, as to the grand revolutions and ſucceſſive faces of Nature, through a long ſeries of Ages. If we have given a true account of the motions of the Chaos, we have alſo truly form'd the firſt habitable Earth. And if that be truly form'd, we have thereby given a true account of the ſtate of Paradiſe, and of all that depends upon it. And not of that onely, but alſo of the univerſal Deluge. Both theſe we have ſhewn in their cauſes: The one from the Form of that Earth, and the other from the Fall of it into the Abyſs. And tho' we had not been made acquainted with theſe things by Antiquity, we might, in contemplation of the Cauſes, have truly conceiv'd them, as properties or incidents to the Firſt Earth. But as to the Deluge, I do not ſay, that we might have calculated the Time, manner, and other circumſtances of it: Theſe things were regulated by Providence, in ſubordination to the Moral World. But that there would be, at one time or other, a diſruption of that Earth, or of the Great Abyſs: and in conſequence of it, an univerſal Deluge: So far, I think, the light of a Theory might carry us.

Furthermore, In conſequence of this diſruption of the Primeval Earth, at the Deluge, the preſent Earth was made hollow and cavernous: and by that means, (due preparations being uſed) capable of *Combuſtion*, or of periſhing by an univerſal Fire: Yet, to ſpeak ingenuouſly, This is as hard a ſtep to be made, in ver-

Theor. book 3. ch. 7, & 8.

tue

tue of Natural cauſes, as any in the whole Theory. But in recompence of that defect, the Conflagration is ſo plainly and literally taught us in Scripture, and avow'd by Antiquity, that it can fall under no diſpute, as to the thing it ſelf. And as to a capacity or diſpoſition to it in the preſent Earth, that I think is ſufficiently made out.

Then, the Conflagration admitted, in that way it is explain'd in the *3d.* Book: The Earth, you ſee, is, by that fire, reduc'd to a ſecond Chaos. A Chaos truly ſo call'd. And from that, as from the Firſt, ariſes another Creation, or *New Heavens* and a *New Earth*; By the ſame cauſes, and in the ſame form, with the Paradiſiacal. This is the *Renovation* of the World: The *Reſtitution* of all things: mentioned both by Scripture and Antiquity: and by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, St. *Peter* and St. *John*, call'd the *New Heavens* and *New Earth.* With this, as the laſt period, and moſt glorious Scene of all humane affairs, our Theory concludes, as to this method of Cauſes, whereof we are now ſpeaking.

I ſay, here it ends as to the *method of Cauſes.* For tho' we purſue the Earth ſtill further, even to its laſt Diſſolution: which is call'd the Conſummation of all things: yet all, that we have ſuperadded upon that occaſion, is but Problematical: and may, without prejudice to the Theory, be argued and diſputed on either hand. I do not know, but that our conjectures there may be well grounded: but however, not ſpringing ſo directly from the ſame root, or, at leaſt, not by ways, ſo clear and viſible, I leave that part undecided. Eſpecially ſeeing we pretend to write no more than the *Theory of the Earth*, and therefore as we begin no higher than the *Chaos*, ſo we are not obliged to go any further than to the laſt ſtate of a Terreſtrial conſiſtency: which is that of the New Heavens and the New Earth.

This is the firſt natural proof, From the order of Cauſes. The ſecond is from the conſideration of Effects. Namely of ſuch effects as are already in being. And therefore this proof can extend onely to that part of the Theory, that explains the preſent and paſt

form

form and Phænomena of the Earth. What is Future, muſt be left to a further trial, when the things come to paſs, and preſent themſelves to be examin'd and compar'd with the Hypotheſis. As to the preſent Form of the Earth, we call all Nature to witneſs for us: The Rocks and the Mountains, the Hills and the Valleys, the deep and wide Sea, and the Caverns of the Ground: Let theſe ſpeak, and tell their origine: How the Body of the Earth came to be thus torn and mangled: If this ſtrange and irregular ſtructure was not the effect of a ruine: and of ſuch a ruine as was univerſal over the face of the whole Globe. But we have given ſuch a full explication of this, in the firſt part of the Theory, from *Chapt. the 9th.* to the end of that Treatiſe, that we dare ſtand to the judgment, of any that reads thoſe four Chapters, to determine if the Hypotheſis does not anſwer all thoſe Phænomena, eaſily and adequately.

The next Phænomenon to be conſider'd, is the *Deluge*, with its adjuncts. This alſo is fully explain'd by our Hypotheſis, in the 2*d.* 3*d.* and *6th.* Chapters of the firſt Book. Where it is ſhewn, that the *Moſaical Deluge*, that is, an univerſal Inundation of the whole Earth, above the tops of the higheſt Mountains, made by a breaking open of the Great Abyſs, (for thus far *Moſes* leads us) is fully explain'd by this Hypotheſis, and cannot be conceiv'd in any other method. There are no ſources or ſtores of Water ſufficient for ſuch an effect: that may be drawn upon the Earth, and drawn off again, but by ſuppoſing ſuch an Abyſs, and ſuch a Diſruption of it, as the Theory repreſents.

Laſtly, As to the Phænomena of Paradiſe and the Ante-diluvian World, we have ſet them down in order in the 2*d.* Book: and apply'd to each of them its proper explication, from the ſame Hypotheſis. We have alſo given an account of that Character which Antiquity always aſſign'd to the firſt age of the World, or the Golden Age, as they call'd it: namely, *Equality of Seaſons* throughout the Year, or a perpetual Equinox. We have alſo taken in all the adjuncts or concomitants of theſe States, as they are mention'd in Scripture. *The Longevity* of the Ante-diluvians, and

the declenſion of their age by degrees, after the Flood. As alſo that wonderful Phænomenon, the *Rainbow*: which appear'd to *Noah* for a Sign, that the Earth ſhould never undergo a ſecond Deluge. And we have ſhewn, wherein the force and propriety of that Sign conſiſted, for confirming *Noah*'s faith in the promiſe and in the divine veracity.

Theor. Book 2. chap. 5.

Thus far we have explain'd the paſt Phænomena of the Natural World. The reſt are Futurities, which ſtill lie hid in their Cauſes; and we cannot properly prove a Theory from effects that are not yet in being. But ſo far as they are foretold in Scripture, both as to ſubſtance and circumſtance, in proſecution of the ſame Principles we have ante-dated their birth, and ſhew'd how they will come to paſs. We may therefore, I think, reaſonably conclude, That this Theory has performed its task and anſwer'd its title: having given an account of all the general changes of the Natural World, as far as either Sacred Hiſtory looks backwards, or Sacred Prophecy looks forwards. So far as the one tells us what is paſt in Nature, and the other what is to come. And if all this be nothing but an appearance of truth, 'tis a kind of fatality upon us to be deceiv'd.

SO much for Natural Evidence, from the Cauſes or Effects. We now proceed to Scripture, which will make the greateſt part of this Review. The Sacred Baſis upon which the whole Theory ſtands, is the doctrine of S. *Peter*, deliver'd in his *Second Epiſtle* and *Third Chapter*, concerning the *Triple Order* and Succeſſion of the Heavens and the Earth. That comprehends the whole extent of our Theory: which indeed is but a large Commentary upon S. *Peter*'s Text. The Apoſtle ſets out a threefold ſtate of the Heavens and Earth: with ſome general properties of each:

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taken from their different Conſtitution and different Fate. The Theory takes the ſame threefold ſtate of the Heavens and the Earth: and explains more particularly, wherein their different Conſtitution conſiſts: and how, under the conduct of Providence, their different fate depends upon it. Let us ſet down the Apoſtle's words, with the occaſion of them: and their plain ſence, according to the moſt eaſie and natural explication.

Ver. 3. *Knowing this firſt, that there ſhall come in the laſt days ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts.* 2 Pet. 3.

4. *And ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his coming? for ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

5. *For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth conſiſting of water and by water.*

6. *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, periſhed.*

7. *But the heavens and the earth that are now, by the ſame word, are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire againſt the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.*------

10. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; the earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.*

13. *Nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.*

This is the whole Diſcourſe ſo far as relates to our Subject. S. *Peter*, you ſee, had met with ſome that ſcoff'd at the future deſtruction of the World, and the coming of our Saviour; and they were men, it ſeems, that pretended to Philoſophy and Argument; and they uſe this argument for their opinion, *Seeing there hath been no change in Nature, or in the World, from the beginning to this time, why ſhould we think there will be any change for the future?*

The Apoſtle anſwers to this, That they willingly forget or are ignorant that there were Heavens of old, and an Earth, ſo and ſo conſtituted; conſiſting of Water and by Water; by reaſon whereof that World, or thoſe Heavens and that Earth, periſh'd in a Deluge of Water. But, ſaith he, the Heavens and the Earth that are now, are of another conſtitution, fitted and reſerved to another fate, namely to periſh by Fire. And after theſe are periſh'd, there will be New Heavens and a New Earth, according to God's promiſe.

This is an eaſie Paraphraſe, and the plain and genuine ſence of the Apoſtle's diſcourſe; and no body, I think, would ever look after any other ſence, if this did not draw them into paths they do not know, and to concluſions which they do not fancy. This ſence, you ſee, hits the objection directly, or the Cavil which theſe ſcoffers made; and tells them, that they vainly pretend that there hath been no change in the World ſince the beginning, for there was one ſort of Heavens and Earth before the Flood, and another ſort now; the firſt having been deſtroyed at the Deluge. So that the Apoſtle's argument ſtands upon this Foundation, That there is a diverſity betwixt the preſent Heavens and Earth, and the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth; take away that, and you take away all the force of his Anſwer.

Then as to his *New Heavens* and *New Earth* after the Conflagration, they muſt be material and natural, in the ſame ſence and ſignification with the former Heavens and Earth; unleſs you will offer open violence to the Text. So that this Triplicity of the Heavens and the Earth, is the firſt, obvious, plain ſence of the Apoſtle's diſcourſe: which every one would readily accept, if it did not draw after it a long train of Conſequences, and lead them into other Worlds than they ever thought of before, or are willing to enter upon now.

But we ſhall have occaſion by and by, to examine this Text more fully in all its circumſtances. Give me leave in the mean time to obſerve, that S. *Paul* alſo implyes that *triple Creation* which S. *Peter* expreſſes. S. *Paul*, I ſay, in the *8th chap.* to the *Rom.ver.* 20, 21.

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tell us of a *Creation* that will be *redeem'd from Vanity:* which are the new Heavens and new Earth to come. *A Creation in ſubjection to Vanity:* which is the preſent ſtate of the World. And a *Creation* that was ſubjected to Vanity, in hopes of being reſtor'd: which was the firſt Paradiſiacal Creation. And theſe are the three ſtates of the Natural World, which make the ſubject of our Theory.

To theſe two places of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, I might add that third in St. *John*, concerning the new Heavens and new Earth; with that diſtinguiſhing Character, that the Earth was *without a Sea.* As this diſtinguiſheth it from the preſent Earth, ſo, being a *Reſtitution* or *Reſtauration*, as we noted before, it muſt be the ſame with ſome former Earth: and conſequently, it implies that there was another precedent ſtate of the natural World, to which this is a Reſtitution. Theſe three places I alledge, as comprehending and confirming the Theory in its full extent. But we do not ſuppoſe them all of the ſame force and clearneſs. St. *Peter* leads the way, and gives light and ſtrength to the other two. When a Point is prov'd by one clear Text, we allow others, as auxiliaries, that are not of the ſame clearneſs; But being open'd, receive light from the primary Text, and reflect it upon the Argument.

So much for the Theory in general. We will now take one or two principal heads of it, which vertually contain all the reſt, and examine them more ſtrictly and particularly, in reference to their agreement with Scripture. The two Heads we pitch upon, ſhall be, our Explication of the Deluge, and our Explication of the new Heavens and new Earth. We told you before, theſe two were as the Hinges, upon which all the Theory moves, and which hold the parts of it in firm union one with another. As to the Deluge, if I have explain'd that aright, by the Diſruption of the Great Abyſs, and the Diſſolution of the Earth that cover'd it, all the reſt follows in ſuch a chain of conſequences, as cannot be broken. Wherefore in order to the proof of that explication, and of all that depends upon it, I will make bold to lay down this Propoſi-

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tion, *That our Hypotheſis concerning the univerſal Deluge, is not onely more agreeable to Reaſon and Philoſophy than any other yet propos'd to the World, but is alſo more agreeable to Scripture.* Namely, to ſuch places of Scripture, as reflect upon the *Deluge*, the *Abyſs*, and the form of the *firſt Earth.* And particularly,to the *Hiſtory of Noah's Flood*, as *recorded by Moſes.* If I can make this good, it will, doubtleſs, give ſatisfaction to all intelligent Perſons. And I deſire their patience, if I proceed ſlowly. We will divide our task into parts, and examine them ſeparately: Firſt, by Scripture in general, and then by *Moſes* his hiſtory and deſcription of the Flood.

Our Hypotheſis of the Deluge conſiſts of three principal Heads, or differs remarkably in three things from the common explication. Firſt, in that we ſuppoſe the Antediluvian Earth to have been of another Form and conſtitution from the preſent Earth: with the Abyſs placed under it.

Secondly, in that we ſuppoſe the Deluge to have been made, not by any inundation of the Sea, or overflowing of Fountains and Rivers: nor (principally) by any exceſs of rains: but by a real diſſolution of the exteriour Earth, and diſruption of the Abyſs which it cover'd. Theſe are the two principal points, to which may be added, as a Corollary,

Thirdly, that the Deluge was not in the nature of a ſtanding Pool: the Waters lying every where level, of an equal depth and with an uniform Surface: but was made by a fluctuation and commotion of the Abyſs upon the diſruption: which commotion being over, the Waters retired into their Chanels, and let the dry Land appear.

Theſe are the moſt material and fundamental parts of our Hypotheſis: and theſe being prov'd conſonant to Scripture, there can be no doubt of the reſt.

We begin with the firſt: That the Ante-diluvian Earth was of another form and conſtitution from the preſent Earth, with the Abyſs placed under it. This is confirm'd in Scripture, both by ſuch places as aſſert a diverſity in general: and by other places that intimate to us, wherein that diverſity conſiſted, and what

was

was the form of the firſt Earth. That diſcourſe of St. *Peter*'s, which we have ſet before you, concerning the paſt, preſent, and future, Heavens and Earth, is ſo full a proof of this diverſity in general, that you muſt either allow it, or make the Apoſtle's argumentation of no effect. He ſpeaks plainly of the natural World; *The Heavens and the Earth*: And he makes a plain diſtinction, or rather oppoſition, betwixt thoſe before and after the Flood: ſo that the leaſt we can conclude from his words, is a diverſity betwixt them; In anſwer to that Identity or immutability of Nature, which the Scoffers pretended to have been ever ſince the beginning.

But tho' the Apoſtle, to me, ſpeaks plainly of the *Natural World*, and diſtinguiſhes that which was before the Flood, from the preſent: Yet there are ſome that will allow neither of theſe to be contain'd in St. *Peter*'s words; and by that means would make this whole Diſcourſe of little or no effect, as to our purpoſe. And ſeeing we, on the contrary, have made it the chief Scripture-baſis of the whole Theory of the Earth, we are oblig'd to free it from thoſe falſe gloſſes or miſ-interpretations, that leſſen the force of its teſtimony, or make it wholly ineffectual.

Theſe Interpreters ſay, that St. *Peter* meant no more than to mind theſe Scoffers, that the World was once deſtroy'd by a Deluge of Water: meaning the *Animate World*, Mankind and living Creatures. And that it ſhall be deſtroy'd again by another Element, namely by Fire. So as there is no oppoſition or diverſity betwixt the two Natural Worlds, taught or intended by the Apoſtle; but onely in reference to their different fate or manner of periſhing, and not of their different nature or conſtitution.

Here are two main points, you ſee, wherein our interpretations of this diſcourſe of the Apoſtles, differ. Firſt, in that they make the Apoſtle (in that *ſixth verſe*) to underſtand onely the World *Animate*, or men and brute Creatures. That theſe were indeed deſtroy'd, but not the Natural World, or the form and conſtitution of the then Earth and Heavens. Secondly, that there is no diverſity or oppoſition made by St. *Peter* betwixt

betwixt the ancient Heavens and Earth, and the preſent, as to their form and conſtitution. We pretend that theſe are miſ-apprehenſions, or miſ-repreſentations of the ſence of the Apoſtle in both reſpects, and offer theſe reaſons to prove them to be ſo.

For the firſt point; That the Apoſtle ſpeaks here of the natural World, particularly in the *6th.* Verſe; and that it periſh'd, as well as the animate, theſe Conſiderations ſeem to prove.

Firſt, becauſe the argument or ground theſe Scoffers went upon, was taken from the natural World, its conſtancy and permanency in the ſame ſtate from the beginning; therefore if the Apoſtle anſwers *ad idem*, and takes away their argument, he muſt underſtand the ſame natural World, and ſhow that it hath been chang'd, or hath periſh'd.

You will ſay, it may be, the Apoſtle doth not deny, nor take away the ground they went upon, but denies the conſequence they made from it; that *therefore there would be no change, becauſe there had been none.* No, neither doth he do this, if by the *World* in the *6th.* Verſe, he underſtands Mankind onely; for their ground was this, *there hath been no change in the natural World*; Their conſequence, this, *therefore there will be none*, nor any Conflagration. Now the Apoſtle's anſwer, according to you, is this, *you forget that Mankind hath been deſtroyed in a Deluge.* And what then? what's this to the natural World, whereof they were ſpeaking? this takes away neither antecedent nor conſequent, neither ground nor inference; nor any way toucheth their argument, which proceeded from the natural World to the natural World. Therefore you muſt either ſuppoſe that the Apoſtle takes away their ground, or he takes away nothing.

Secondly, what is it that the Apoſtle tells theſe Scoffers they were ignorant of? that there was a Deluge, that deſtroyed Mankind? They could not be ignorant of that, nor pretend to be ſo; It was therefore the conſtitution of thoſe old Heavens and Earth, and the change or deſtruction of them at the Deluge, that they were ignorant of, or did not attend to; and of this the Apoſtle minds them. Theſe Scoffers appear

to

to have been *Jews* by the phraſe they uſe, *ſince the Fathers fell aſleep*, which in both parts of it is a Judaical expreſſion; And does St. *Peter* tell the *Jews* that had *Moſes* read to them every Sabbath, that *they were ignorant that Mankind was once deſtroyed with a Deluge in the Days of Noah?* or could they pretend to be ignorant of that without making themſelves ridiculous both to *Jews* and Chriſtians? Beſides, theſe do not ſeem to have been of the vulgar amongſt them, for they bring a Philoſophical argument for their opinion; and alſo in their very argument they refer to the Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, in ſaying, *Since the Fathers fell aſleep*, amongſt which Fathers, *Noah* was one of the moſt remarkable.

There was a Sect amongſt the *Jews* that held this perpetuity and gives the ſame reaſon for it with the Scoffers here in the Text, *Quod mundus retinet & ſequitur conſuetudinem ſuam.* And as to thoſe of the *Jews* that were *Ariſtoteleans*, it was very ſuitable to their principles to hold the incorruptibility of the World, as their Maſter did. *Vid. Med. in loc.*

Thirdly, the deſign of the Apoſtle is to prove to them, or to diſpoſe them to the belief of the Conflagration, or future deſtruction of the World; which I ſuppoſe you will not deny to be a deſtruction of the natural World; therefore to prove or perſwade this, he muſt uſe an argument taken from a precedent deſtruction of the natural World; for to give an inſtance of the periſhing of Mankind onely, would not reach home to his purpoſe. And you are to obſerve here that the Apoſtle does not proceed againſt them barely by authority; for what would that have booted? If theſe Scoffers would have ſubmitted to authority, they had already the authority of the Prophets and Apoſtles in this point: but he deals with them at their own weapon, and oppoſes reaſons to reaſons; What hath been done may be done, and if the natural World hath been once deſtroyed, 'tis not hard, nor unreaſonable, to ſuppoſe thoſe Prophecies to be true, that ſay it ſhall be deſtroyed again.

Fourthly, unleſs we underſtand here the natural World, we make the Apoſtle both redundant in his diſcourſe, and alſo very obſcure in an eaſie argument. If his deſign was onely to tell them that Mankind was once deſtroy'd in a Deluge, what's that to the

Heavens and the Earth? the 5*th.* Verſe would be ſuperfluous; which yet he ſeems to make the foundation of his diſcourſe. He might have told them how Mankind had periſh'd before with a Deluge, and aggravated that deſtruction as much as he pleas'd, without telling them how the Heavens and the Earth were conſtituted then; what was that to the purpoſe, if it had no dependance or connection with the other? In the precedent Chapter, Verſe 5*th.* when he ſpeaks onely of the Floods deſtroying Mankind, he mentions nothing of the Heavens or the Earth: and if you make him to intend no more here, what he ſays more is ſuperfluous.

I alſo add, that you make the Apoſtle very obſcure and operoſe in a very eaſie argument. How eaſie had it been for him, without this *Apparatus*, to have told them, as he did before, that God brought a Flood upon the World of the ungodly; and not given us ſo much difficulty to underſtand his ſence, or ſuch a ſuſpicion and appearance, that he intended ſomething more; for that there is at leaſt a great appearance and tendency to a further ſence, I think none can deny; And St. *Auſtin*, *Didymus Alex. Bede*, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, underſtood it plainly of the natural World: Alſo modern Expoſitors and Criticks; as *Cajetan*, *Eſtius*, *Druſius*, *Heinſius*, have extended it to the natural World, more or leſs; tho' they had no Theory to miſlead them, nor ſo much as an hypotheſis to ſupport them; but attended onely to the tenor of the Apoſtle's diſcourſe, which conſtrain'd them to that ſence, in whole or in part.

Fifthly, the oppoſition carries it upon the natural World. The oppoſition lies betwixt the οἱ ἔκπαλαι οὐρανοὶ καὶ γῆ and οἱ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ γῆ, the Heavens that were of old, and the Earth, and the preſent Heavens and Earth, or the two natural Worlds. And if they will not allow them to be oppos'd in their natures (which yet we ſhall prove by and by) at leaſt they muſt be oppos'd in their fate; and as This is to periſh by fire, ſo That periſh'd by water; And if it periſh'd by water, it periſh'd; which is all we contend for at preſent.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, if we would be as eaſily govern'd in the expoſition of this place, as we are of other places of Scripture, it would be enough to ſuggeſt, that in reaſon and fairneſs of interpretation, the ſame World is deſtroy'd in the *6th verſe*, that was deſcrib'd in the foregoing *verſe*; but it is the Natural World that is deſcrib'd there, the Heavens and the Earth, ſo and ſo conſtituted; and therefore in fairneſs of interpretation they ought to be underſtood here; that World being the ſubject that went immediately before, and there being nothing in the words that reſtrains them to the animate World or to Mankind. In the *2d ch. ver.* 5. the Apoſtle does reſtrain the word κόσμος by adding ἀσεβῶν, *the World of the ungodly*; but here 'tis not only illimited, but according to the context, both preceding and following, to be extended to the Natural World. I ſay by the following context too, for ſo it anſwers to the World that is to periſh by Fire; which will reach the frame of Nature as well as Mankind.

For a concluſion of this firſt point, I will ſet down S. *Auſtin*'s judgment in this caſe; who in ſeveral parts of his works hath interpreted this place of S. *Peter, of the natural world.* As to the heavens, he hath theſe words in his Expoſition upon *Geneſis*, *Hos etiam aerios cœlos quondam periiſſe Diluvio, in quâdam earum quæ Canonica appellantur, Epiſtolâ legimus. We read in one of the Epiſtles called Canonical*, meaning this of S. *Peter's*, *that the aerial heavens periſh'd in the Deluge.* And he concerns himſelf there to let you know that it was not the ſtarry heavens that were deſtroy'd; the waters could not reach ſo high; but the regions of our air. Then afterwards he hath theſe words *Faciliùs eos* (cœlos) *ſecundum illius Epiſtolæ authoritatem credimus periiſſe, & alios, ſicut ibi ſcribitur, repoſitos. We do more eaſily believe, according to the authority of* that *Epiſtle, thoſe heavens to have periſh'd; and others, as it is there written, ſubſtituted in their place.* In like manner, and to the ſame ſence, he hath theſe words upon *Pſal.* 101. *Aerii utique cœli perierunt ut propinqui Terris, ſecundum quod dicuntur volucres cœli; ſunt autem & cœli cœlorum, ſuperiores in Firmamento, ſed utrùm*

& ipſi perituri ſint igni, an hi ſoli, qui etiam diluvio perierunt, diſceptatio eſt aliquanto ſcrupuloſior inter doctos. And in his Book *de Civ. Dei*, he hath ſeveral paſſages to the ſame purpoſe, *Quemadmodum in Apoſtolicâ illâ Epiſtolâ à toto pars accipitur, quod diluvio periiſſe dictus eſt mundus, quamvis ſola ejus cum ſuis cœlis pars ima perierit.* Theſe being to the ſame effect with the firſt citation, I need not make them Engliſh; and this laſt place refers to the Earth as well as the Heavens, as ſeveral other places in S. *Auſtin* do, whereof we ſhall give you an account, when we come to ſhew his judgment concerning the ſecond point, *the diverſity of the ante-diluvian and poſt-diluvian World.* This being but a foretaſte of his good will and inclinations towards this doctrine.

Theſe conſiderations alledg'd, ſo far as I can judge, are full and unanſwerable proofs, that this diſcourſe of the Apoſtle's comprehends and refers to the Natural World; and conſequently they warrant our interpretation in this particular, and deſtroy the contrary. We have but one ſtep more to make good, *That there was a change made in this natural world at the Deluge*, according to the Apoſtle; and this is to confute the ſecond part of their interpretation, which ſuppoſeth that S. *Peter* makes no diſtinction or oppoſition betwixt the antediluvian Heavens and Earth, and the preſent Heavens and Earth, in that reſpect.

This ſecond difference betwixt us, methinks, is ſtill harſher than the firſt; and contrary to the very form, as well as to the matter of the Apoſtle's diſcourſe. For there is a plain antitheſis, or oppoſition made betwixt the Heavens and the Earth of old (*ver. the 5th*) and the Heavens and the Earth that are now (*verſe the 7th*) οἱ ἐκπαλαι οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ and οἱ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ, δὲ and the adverſative particle, *but*, you ſee marks the oppoſition; ſo that it is full and plain according to Grammar and Logick. And that the parts or members of this oppoſition differ in nature from one another, is certain from this, becauſe otherwiſe the Apoſtle's argument or diſcourſe is of no effect, concludes nothing to the purpoſe; he makes no anſwer to the objection, nor proves any thing againſt the Scoffers,

Scoffers, unleſs you admit that diverſity. For they ſaid, *All things had been the ſame from the beginning in the Natural World*, and unleſs he ſay, as he manifeſtly does, that there hath been a change in Nature, and that the Heavens and Earth that are now, are different from the ancient Heavens and Earth, which periſh'd at the Flood, he ſays nothing to deſtroy their argument, nor to confirm the Prophetical doctrine of the future deſtruction of the Natural World.

This, I think, would be enough to ſatisfie any clear and free mind concerning the meaning of the Apoſtle; but becauſe I deſire to give as full a light to this place as I can, and to put the ſence of it out of controverſie, if poſſible, for the future, I will make ſome further remarks to confirm this expoſition.

And we may obſerve that ſeveral of thoſe reaſons which we have given to prove, That the *Natural World* is underſtood by S. *Peter*, are double reaſons; and do alſo prove the other point in queſtion, a *diverſity betwixt the two Natural Worlds*, the Anti-diluvian and the preſent. As for inſtance, unleſs you admit this diverſity betwixt the two natural Worlds, you make the 5*th verſe* in this *Chapter* ſuperfluous and uſeleſs: and you muſt ſuppoſe the Apoſtle to make an inference here without premiſes. In the 6*th verſe* he makes an inference, * *Whereby* the World, that then was, periſh'd in a Deluge; what does this *whereby* relate to? *by reaſon* of what? ſure of the particular conſtitution of the Heavens and the Earth immediately before deſcrib'd. Neither would it have ſignified any thing to the Scoffers, for the Apoſtle to have told them how the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth were conſtituted, if they were conſtituted juſt in the ſame manner as the preſent.

* δι' ὧν, *per quæ*. Vulgat. *Quamobrem*, Beza. *Quâ de cauſâ*, Grot. *Nemo interpretum reddidit* δι' ὧν per quas; *ſubintelligendo* aquas. *Hoc enim argumentationem Apoſtolicam tolleret, ſupponeretque illuſores illos ignorâſſe quod olim fuerit Diluvium*; *Quod ſuppoſitum non poſſe ſuprà oſtendimus.*

Beſides, what is it, as I ask'd before, that the Apoſtle tells theſe Scoffers they were ignorant of? does he not ſay formally and expreſly (*ver.* 5.) that they were ignorant that the Heavens and the Earth were conſtituted

tuted ſo and ſo, before the Flood? but if they were conſtituted as theſe preſent Heavens and Earth are, they were not ignorant of their conſtitution; nor did pretend to be ignorant, for their own (miſtaken) argument ſuppoſeth it.

But before we proceed any further, give me leave to note the impropriety of our Tranſlation, in the 5*th.* Verſe, or latter part of it; Ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὑδάτων (vel δι' ὕδατος) συνεστῶσα, This we tranſlate *ſtanding in the water, and out of the water*, which is done manifeſtly in compliance with the preſent form of the Earth, and the notions of the Tranſlators: and not according to the natural force and ſence of the *Greek* words. If one met with this ſentence * in a *Greek* Author, who would ever render it *ſtanding in the water and out of the water?* nor do I know any *Latin* Tranſlator that hath ventur'd to render them in that ſence; nor any *Latin* Father; St. *Auſtin* and St. *Jerome* I'me ſure do not, but *Conſiſtens ex aquâ*, or *de aquâ, & per aquam:* for that later phraſe alſo συνεστάναι δι' ὕδατος does not with ſo good propriety ſignifie *to ſtand in the water*, as to conſiſt or ſubſiſt by water, or by the help of water, *Tanquam per cauſam ſuſtinentem*; as St. *Auſtin* and *Jerome* render it. Neither does that inſtance they give from 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. prove any thing to the contrary, for the Ark was ſuſtain'd by the waters, and the *Engliſh* does render it accordingly.

* This phraſe or manner of ſpeech συνιστάναι ἐκ vel ἐξ is not unuſual in *Greek* Authors, and upon a like ſubject; *Plato* ſaith, τὸν δὲ κόσμον συνιστάναι ἐκ πυρὸς, ὕδατος, ἀέρος, γῆς, but he that ſhould tranſlate *Plato*, *The world ſtands out of fire, water, &c.* would be thought neither *Græcian*, nor Philoſopher. The ſame phraſe is us'd in reciting *Heraclitus* his opinion, τὰ πάντα ἐκ πυρὸς συνεστάναι, καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι. And alſo in *Thales* his, which is ſtill nearer to the ſubject, ἐκ τοῦ ὑδατός, φησι, συνιστάναι πάντα, which *Cicero* renders, *ex aquâ, dixit, conſtare omnia.* So that it is eaſie to know the true importance of this phraſe, and how ill it is render'd in the Engliſh, *ſtanding out of the water.*

The Tranſlation being thus rectified, you ſee the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth conſiſted of Water, and by water; which makes way for a ſecond obſervation to prove our ſence of the Text; for if you admit no diverſity betwixt thoſe Heavens and Earth, and the preſent, ſhew us 'pray, how the preſent Heavens and Earth conſiſt of water, and by water. What watery conſtitution have they? The Apoſtle implies rather, that *The now Heavens and Earth* have a fiery conſtitution. We have now Meteors of all ſorts in the air, winds, hail, ſnow, lightning, thunder, and all things

things engender'd of fiery exhalations, as well as we have rain; but according to our Theory, the ante-diluvian Heavens, of all theſe Meteors had none but dews and rain, or watery Meteors onely; and therefore might very aptly be ſaid by the Apoſtle to be *conſtituted of water*, or to have a watery σύστασις. Then the Earth was ſaid to *conſiſt by water*, becauſe it was built upon it, and at firſt was ſuſtain'd by it. And when ſuch a Key as this is put into our hands, that does ſo eaſily unlock this hard paſſage, and makes it intelligible, according to the juſt force of the words, why ſhould we pertinaciouſly adhere to an interpretation, that neither agrees with the words, nor makes any ſence that is conſiderable?

Book 2. c. 5. p. 233.

Whether you refer the words ἐξ ὕδατ. καὶ δι' ὕδατ. ſeparately, to the Heavens and the Earth, or both to the Earth, or both to both, it will make no great difference as to our interpretation.

Thirdly, If the Apoſtle had made the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth the ſame with the preſent, his apodoſis in the *7th.* Verſe, ſhould not have been οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ, but καὶ οἱ αὐτοὶ οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσί, &c. I ſay, it ſhould not have been by way of antitheſis, but of identity or continuation; *And the ſame Heavens and Earth are kept in ſtore reſerv'd unto fire, &c.* Accordingly we ſee the Apoſtle ſpeaks thus, as to the Logos, or the *Word of God*, Verſe 7. τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ, *by the ſame Word of God*; where the thing is the ſame, he expreſſeth it as the ſame; And if it had been the ſame Heavens and Earth, as well as the ſame Word of God, Why ſhould he uſe a mark of oppoſition for the one, and of identity for the other? to this I do not ſee what can be fairly anſwer'd.

Fourthly, the ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth were different from the preſent, becauſe, as the Apoſtle intimates, they were ſuch, and ſo conſtituted, as made them obnoxious to a Deluge; whereas ours are of ſuch a form, as makes them incapable of a Deluge, and obnoxious to a Conflagration; the juſt contrary fate.

Theor. 1 Book. c. 2.

If you ſay there was nothing of natural tendency or diſpoſition in either World to their reſpective fate, but the firſt might as well have periſh'd by fire, as water,

water, and this by water as by fire, you unhinge all Nature and natural providence in that method, and contradict one main ſcope of the Apoſtle in this diſcourſe. His firſt ſcope is to aſſert, and mind them of that diverſity there was betwixt the ancient Heavens and Earth, and the preſent; and from that, to prove againſt thoſe Scoffers, that there had been a change and revolution in Nature; And his ſecond ſcope ſeems to be this, to ſhow that diverſity to be ſuch, as, under the Divine conduct, leads to a different fate, and expos'd that World to a Deluge; for when he had deſcrib'd the conſtitution of the firſt Heavens and Earth, he ſubjoyns, δι' ὧν ὁ τοτε κόσμος ὕδατι κατακλυσθεὶς ἀπόλετο. *Quià talis erat*, ſaith *Grotius*, *qualem diximus*, *conſtitutio & Terræ & Cœli. WHEREBY the then World periſh'd in a Flood of Water.* This *whereby* notes ſome kind of cauſal dependance, and muſt relate to ſome means or conditions precedent. It cannot relate to Logos, or *the Word of God*, Grammar will not permit that; therefore it muſt relate to the ſtate of the antediluvian Heavens and Earth immediately premis'd. And to what purpoſe indeed ſhould he premiſe the deſcription of thoſe Heavens and Earth, if it was not to lay a ground for this inference?

Having given theſe Reaſons for the neceſſity of this Interpretation; in the laſt place, let's conſider St. *Auſtin*'s judgment, and his ſence upon this place, as to the point in queſtion. As alſo the reflections that ſome other of the Ancients have made upon this doctrine of St. *Peter*'s. *Didymus Alexandrinus*, who was for ſome time St. *Jerome*'s Maſter, made ſuch a ſevere reflection upon it, that he ſaid this Epiſtle was corrupted, and ſhould not be admitted into the Canon, becauſe it taught the doctrine of a *Triple* or *Triform World* in this third Chapter. As you may ſee in his *Enarr. in Epiſt. Canonicas.* Now this threefold World is firſt that in the *6th.* Verſe, *The World that then was.* In the *7th.* Verſe, *The Heavens and the Earth that are now.* And in the *13th.* Verſe, *We expect new Heavens and a new Earth, according to his promiſe.* This ſeems to be a fair account that St. *Peter* taught the doctrine of a triple World; And I quote this teſtimony, to

ſhow

ſhow what St. *Peter*'s words do naturally import, even in the judgment of one that was not of his mind. And a Man is not prone to make an expoſition againſt his own Opinion, unleſs he think the words very pregnant and expreſs.

But St. *Auſtin* owns the authority of this Epiſtle, and of this doctrine, as deriv'd from it, taking notice of this Text of St. *Peter*'s in ſeveral Parts of his Works. We have noted three or four places already to this purpoſe, and we may further take notice of ſeveral paſſages in his Treatiſe, *de Civ. Dei*, which confirm our expoſition. In his 20*th.* Book, *ch.* 24. he diſputes againſt *Porphyry*, who had the ſame Principles with theſe Æternaliſts in the Text; or, if I may ſo call them, Incorruptarians; and thought the World never had, nor ever would undergo any change, eſpecially as to the Heavens. St. *Auſtin* could not urge *Porphyry* with the authority of St. *Peter*, for he had no veneration for the Chriſtian Oracles; but it ſeems he had ſome for the *Jewiſh*, and arguing againſt him, upon that Text in the Pſalms, *Cœli peribunt*, he ſhows upon occaſion how he underſtands St. *Peter*'s deſtruction of the Old World. *Legitur Cœlum & Terra tranſibunt, Mundus tranſit, ſed puto quod præterit, tranſit, tranſibunt aliquantò mitiùs dicta ſunt quàm peribunt. In Epiſtolâ quoque Petri Apoſtoli, ubi aquâ inundatus, qui tum erat, periiſſe dictus eſt Mundus, ſatis clarum eſt quæ pars mundi à toto ſignificata eſt, & quatenùs periiſſe dicta ſit, & qui cœli repoſiti igni reſervandi.* This he explains more fully afterwards by ſubjoyning a caution (which we cited before) that we muſt not underſtand this paſſage of St. *Peter*'s, concerning the deſtruction of the ante-diluvian World, to take in the whole Univerſe, and the higheſt Heavens, but onely the aerial Heavens, and the ſublunary World. *In Apoſtolicâ illâ Epiſtolâ à toto pars accipitur, quod Diluvio periiſſe dictus eſt mundus, quamvis ſola ejus, cum ſuis cœlis, pars ima perierit. In that Apoſtolical Epiſtle, a part is ſignified by the whole, when the World is ſaid to have periſh'd in the Deluge, although the lower part of it onely, with the Heavens belonging to it, periſhed:* that is, the Earth with the regions of the Air that belong to it. And conſonant

to this, in his expoſition of that hundred and firſt Pſalm, upon thoſe words, *The Heavens are the work of thy hands, They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure.* This periſhing of the Heavens, he ſays, S. *Peter* tells us, hath been once done already, namely, at the Deluge; *Apertè dixit hoc Apoſtolus Petrus, Cœli erant olim & Terra, de aquâ & per aquam conſtituti, Dei verbo; per quod qui factus eſt mundus, aquâ inundatus deperiit; Terra autem & cœli qui nunc ſunt, igni reſervantur. Jam ergo dixit periiſſe cœlos per Diluvium.*

Theſe places ſhew us that S. *Auſtin* underſtood S. *Peter*'s diſcourſe to aim at the natural World, and his *periit* or *periiſſe* (*verſe 6.*) to be of the ſame force as *peribunt* in the Pſalms, when 'tis ſaid the Heavens *ſhall periſh*; and conſequently that the Heavens and the Earth, in this Father's opinion, were as really chang'd and transform'd at the time of the Flood, as they will be at the Conflagration. But we muſt not expect from S. *Auſtin* or any of the Ancients a diſtinct account of this Apoſtolical doctrine, as if they knew and acknowledg'd the Theory of the firſt World; that does not at all appear; but what they ſaid was either from broken Tradition, or extorted from them by the force of the Apoſtle's words and their own ſincerity.

There are yet other places in S. *Auſtin* worthy our conſideration upon this ſubject; eſpecially his expo-
cap. 18. ſition of this *3d chap.* of S. *Peter*, as we find it in that ſame Treatiſe *de Civ. Dei.* There he compares again, the deſtruction of the World at the Deluge, with that which ſhall be at the Conflagration, and ſuppoſeth both the Heavens and Earth to have periſh'd. *Apoſtolus commemorans factum ante Diluvium, videtur admonuiſſe quodammodò quatenùs in fine hujus ſeculi mundum iſtum periturum eſſe credamus. Nam & illo tempore periiſſe dixit, qui tunc erat, mundum; nec ſolum orbem terræ, verùm etiam cœlos,* Then giving his uſual caution, That the Stars and ſtarry heavens ſhould not be comprehended in that mundane deſtruction, He goes on, *Atque hoc modo* (penè totus aer) *cum terra perierat; cujus Terræ utique prior facies* (nempe ante-diluviana) *fuerat deleta Diluvio. Qui autem nunc*

ſunt

ſunt cœli & terra eodem verbo repoſiti ſunt igni reſervandi; Proinde qui cœli & quæ Terra, id eſt, qui mundus, pro eo mundo qui Diluvio periit, ex eâdem aquâ repoſitus eſt, ipſe igni noviſſimo reſervatur. Here you ſee S. *Auſtin*'s ſence upon the whole matter; which is this, That the natural World, the Earth with the Heavens about it, was deſtroyed and chang'd at the Deluge into the preſent Heavens and Earth; which ſhall again in like manner be deſtroyed and chang'd by the laſt fire. Accordingly in another place, to add no more, he ſaith the figure of the (ſublunary) world ſhall be chang'd at the Conflagration, as it was chang'd at the Deluge. *Tunc figura hujus mundi*, &c. *cap.* 16. *cap.* 16.

Thus you ſee, we have S. *Auſtin* on our ſide, in both parts of our interpretation; that S. *Peter*'s diſcourſe is to be referr'd to the natural inanimate World, and that the preſent natural World is diſtinct and different from that which was before the Deluge. And S. *Auſtin* having applyed this expreſly to S. *Peter*'s doctrine by way of Commentary, it will free us from any crime or affectation of ſingularity in the expoſition we have given of that place.

Venerable *Bede* hath followed S. *Auſtin*'s footſteps in this doctrine; for, interpreting S. *Peter*'s *Original World* (Ἀρχαῖος Κόσμος) 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. he refers both that and this (*chap.* 3.6.) to the natural inanimate World, which he ſuppoſeth to have undergone a change at the Deluge. His words are theſe, *idem ipſe mundus eſt* (nempe quoad materiam) *in quo nunc humanum genus habitat, quem inhabitaverunt hi qui ante diluvium fuerunt, ſed tamen rectè Originalis Mundus, quaſi alius, dicitur; quia ſicut in conſequentibus hujus Epiſtolæ ſcriptum continetur, Ille tunc mundus aquâ inundatus periit.* Cœlis videlicet qui erant priùs, id eſt, *cunctis aeris hujus turbulenti ſpaciis, aquarum accreſcentium altitudine conſumptis, ac Terrâ in alteram faciem, excedentibus aquis, immutatâ. Nam etſi montes aliqui atque convalles ab initio facti creduntur, non tamen tanti quanti nunc in orbe cernuntur univerſo.* *'Tis the ſame World* (namely, as to the matter and ſubſtance of it) *which mankind lives in now, and did live*

in before the Flood, but yet that is truly call'd the ORIGINAL WORLD, *being as it were another from the preſent. For 'tis ſaid in the ſequel of this Epiſtle that the World that was then, periſh'd in the Deluge; namely, the regions of the air were conſumed by the height and exceſs of the waters, and by the ſame waters the Earth was chang'd into another form or face. For although ſome Mountains and Valleys are thought to have been made from the beginning, yet not ſuch great ones as now we ſee throughout the whole Earth.*

You ſee this Author does not only own a change made at the Deluge, but offers at a further explication wherein that change conſiſted, *viz.* that the Mountains and inequalities of the Earth were made greater than they were before the Flood; and ſo he makes the change or the difference betwixt the two Worlds gradual, rather than ſpecifical, if I may ſo term it. But we cannot wonder at that, if he had no principles to carry it further, or to make any other ſort of change intelligible to him. *Bede* alſo purſues the ſame ſence and notion in his interpretation of that *fountain*, *Gen.* 2.5. that watered the face of the Earth before the Flood. And many other tranſcribers of Antiquity have recorded this Tradition concerning a difference, gradual or ſpecifical, both in the Ante-diluvian heavens (*Gloſs. Ordin. Gen.* 9. *de Iride. Lyran. ibid. Hiſt. Scholaſt. c.* 35. *Rab. Maurus & Gloſſ. Inter. Gen.* 2. 5, 6. *Alcuin. Quæſt. in Gen. inter.* 135.) and in the Ante-diluvian Earth, as the ſame Authors witneſs in other places. As *Hiſt. Schol. c.* 34. *Gloſſ. Ord. in Gen.* 7. *Alcuin. Inter.* 118, *&c.* Not to inſtance in thoſe that tell us the properties of the Ante-diluvian World under the name and notion of Paradiſe.

De 6. dier. creat.

Thus much concerning this remarkable place in S. *Peter*, and the true expoſition of it; which I have the more largely inſiſted upon, becauſe I look upon this place as the chief repoſitory of that great natural myſtery, which in Scripture is communicated to us, concerning the Triple ſtate or revolution of the World. And of thoſe men that are ſo ſcrupulous to admit the Theory we have propos'd, I would willingly know whether they believe the Apoſtle in what he

ſays

ſays concerning the *New Heavens* and the *New Earth to come, ver.* 13. and if they do, why they ſhould not believe him as much concerning the *Old Heavens* and the *Old Earth,* paſt; *ver.*5, *&* 6. which he mentions as formally, and deſcribes more diſtinctly than the other. But if they believe neither paſt nor to come, in a natural ſence, but an unchangeable ſtate of Nature from the Creation to its annihilation, I leave them then to their Fellow Eternaliſts in the Text, and to the character or cenſure the Apoſtle gives them, Κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμίας πορευόμενοι, men that go by their own private humour and paſſions, and prefer that to all other evidence.

They deſerve this cenſure, I am ſure, if they do not only disbelieve, but alſo ſcoff, at this Prophetick and Apoſtolick doctrine concerning the Viciſſitudes of Nature and a triple World; The Apoſtle in this diſcourſe does formally diſtinguiſh three Worlds (for 'tis well known that the *Hebrews* have no word to ſignifie the natural World, but uſe that Periphraſis, *The Heavens* and *the Earth*) and upon each of them engraves a name and title, that bears a note of diſtinction in it; He calls them the *Old Heavens and Earth,* the *Preſent Heavens and Earth,* and the *New Heavens and Earth.* 'Tis true, theſe three are one, as to matter and ſubſtance; but they muſt differ as to form and properties; otherwiſe what is the ground of this diſtinction and of theſe three different appellations? Suppoſe the *Jews* had expected *Ezekiel*'s Temple for the Third, and laſt, and moſt perfect; and that in the time of the ſecond Temple they had ſpoke of them with this diſtinction, or under theſe different names, The *Old Temple,* the *Preſent Temple,* and the *New Temple* we expect: Would any have underſtood thoſe three of one and the ſame Temple; never demoliſh'd, never chang'd, never rebuilt; always the ſame both as to materials and form? no, doubtleſs, but of three ſeveral Temples ſucceeding one another. And have we not the ſame reaſon to underſtand this Temple of the World, whereof S. *Peter* ſpeaks, to be threefold in ſucceſſion? ſeeing he does as plainly diſtinguiſh it into the *Old* heavens and earth,

earth, the *Preſent* heavens and earth, and the *New* heavens and earth. And I do the more willingly uſe this compariſon of the Temple, becauſe it hath been thought an Emblem of the outward World.

I know we are naturally averſe to entertain any thing that is inconſiſtent with the general frame and texture of our own thoughts; That's to begin the World again; and we often reject ſuch things without examination. Neither do I wonder that the generality of Interpreters beat down the Apoſtle's words and ſence to their own notions; They had no other grounds to go upon, and Men are not willing, eſpecially in natural and comprehenſible things, to put ſuch a meaning upon Scripture, as is unintelligible to themſelves; They rather venture to offer a little violence to the words, that they may pitch the ſence at ſuch a convenient height, as their Principles will reach to. And therefore though ſome of our modern Interpreters, whom I mention'd before, have been ſenſible of the natural tendency of this diſcourſe of St. *Peter's*, and have much ado to bear off the force of the words, ſo as not to acknowledge that they import a real diverſity betwixt the two worlds ſpoken of; yet having no Principles to guide or ſupport them in following that Tract, they are forc'd to ſtop or divert another way. 'Tis like entering into the mouth of a Cave, we are not willing to venture further than the light goes. Nor are they much to blame for this; the fault is onely in thoſe Perſons that continue wilfully in their darkneſs, and when they cannot otherwiſe reſiſt the light, ſhut their eyes againſt it, or turn their head another way.------but I am afraid I have ſtaid too long upon this argument: not for my own ſake, but to ſatisfie others.

You may pleaſe to remember that all that I have ſaid hitherto, belongs onely to the firſt Head: To prove a *Diverſity in general* betwixt the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth, and the preſent: not expreſſing what their particular form was. And this general diverſity may be argued alſo by obſervations taken from *Moſes* his hiſtory of the World, before and after the Flood. From the Longevity of the Antediluvians:

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The Rain-bow appearing after the Deluge: and the breaking open an Abyſs capable to overflow the Earth. The Heavens that had no Rainbow, and under whoſe benign and ſteddy influence, Men liv'd ſeven, eight, nine hundred years and upwards, muſt have been of a different aſpect and conſtitution from the preſent Heavens. And that Earth that had ſuch an Abyſs, that the diſruption of it made an univerſal Deluge, muſt have been of another form than the preſent Earth. And thoſe that will not admit a diverſity in the two worlds, are bound to give us an intelligible account of theſe Phænomena: How they could poſſibly be in Heavens and Earth, like the preſent. Or if they were there once, why they do not continue ſo ſtill, if Nature be the ſame.

See *Theor. Book* 2. *ch.* 5.

We need ſay no more, as to the Ante-diluvian Heavens: but as to the Earth, we muſt now, according to the ſecond Part of the firſt Head; enquire, If that *Particular Form*, which we have aſſign'd it before the Flood, be agreeable to Scripture. You know how we have deſcrib'd the Form and ſituation of that Earth: namely, that it was built over the Abyſs, as a regular Orb, covering and incompaſſing the waters round about: and founded, as it were, upon them. There are many paſſages of Scripture that favour this deſcription: Some more expreſly, others upon a due explication. To this purpoſe there are two expreſs Texts in the Pſalms: as *Pſal.* 24. 1, 2. *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof: The habitable World, and they that dwell therein. FOR he has founded it upon* the Seas, and eſtabliſh'd it upon the Floods.* An Earth founded upon the Seas, and eſtabliſh'd upon the Waters, is not this the Earth we have deſcrib'd? the firſt Earth, as it came from the hands of its Maker. Where can we

* I know ſome would make this place of no effect by rendering the *Hebrew* particle עַל *juxta, by* or *near* to; ſo they would read it thus, *He hath founded the Earth by the Sea-ſide*, and eſtabliſh'd it by the Floods: What is there wonderful in this, that the ſhores ſhould lie by the Sea-ſide; Where could they lie elſe? What reaſon or argument is this, why the Earth ſhould be the Lord's? The Earth is the Lord's, *for* he hath founded it *near* the Seas, Where is the conſequence of this? But if he founded it upon the Seas, which could not be done by any other hand but his, it ſhows both the Workman and the Maſter. And accordingly in that other place, *Pſal.* 136. 6. if you render it, he *ſtretched* out the Earth *near* the Waters, How is that one of God's great wonders? as it is there repreſented to be. Becauſe in ſome few places this particle is render'd otherwiſe, where the ſenſe will bear it, muſt we therefore render it ſo when we pleaſe, and where the ſence will not bear it? This being the moſt uſual ſignification of it, and there being no other word that ſignifies *above* more frequently or determinately than this does, Why muſt it ſignifie otherwiſe in this place? Men will wriggle any way to get from under the force of a Text, that does not ſuit to their own Notions.

now

now find in Nature, ſuch an Earth as has the Seas and the Water for its foundation? Neither is this Text without a ſecond, as a fellow-witneſs to confirm the ſame truth: For in the 136. *Pſalm, ver.* 4, 5, 6. we read to the ſame effect, in theſe words: *To him, who alone does great wonders: To him that by wiſdom made the Heavens: To him that ſtretched out the Earth above the Waters.* We can hardly expreſs that form of the Ante-diluvian Earth, in words more determinate than theſe are; Let us then in the ſame ſimplicity of heart, follow the words of Scripture; ſeeing this literal ſence is not repugnant to Nature, but, on the contrary, agreeable to it upon the ſtricteſt examination. And we cannot, without ſome violence, turn the words to any other ſence. What tolerable interpretation can theſe admit of, if we do not allow the Earth once to have encompaſs'd and overſpread the face of the Waters? To be *founded* upon the waters, to be *eſtabliſh'd* upon the waters, to be *extended* upon the waters, what rational or ſatisfactory account can be given of theſe phraſes and expreſſions from any thing we find in the preſent ſituation of the Earth: or how can they be verified concerning it? Conſult Interpreters, ancient or modern, upon theſe two places: ſee if they anſwer your expectation, or anſwer the natural importance of the words, unleſs they acknowledge another form of the Earth, than the preſent. Becauſe a Rock hangs its noſe over the Sea, muſt the body of the Earth be ſaid to be *ſtretched over the waters?* Or becauſe there are waters in ſome ſubterraneous cavities, is the Earth therefore *founded upon the Seas?* Yet ſuch lame explications as theſe you will meet with; and while we have no better light, we muſt content our ſelves with them; but when an explication is offer'd, that anſwers the propriety, force, and extent of the words, to reject it, onely becauſe it is not fitted to our former opinions, or becauſe we did not firſt think of it, is to take an ill method in expounding Scripture. This *Foundation* or *Eſtabliſhment* of the Earth upon the Seas, this *Extenſion* of it above the waters, relates plainly to the body, or whole circuit of the Earth, not to parcels and particles of it; as appears from

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the occaſion, and its being joyn'd with the Heavens, the other part of the World. Beſides, *David* is ſpeaking of the Origin of the World, and of the Divine power and wiſdom in the conſtruction and ſituation of our Earth, and theſe attributes do not appear from the holes of the Earth, and broken Rocks; which have rather the face of a ruine, than of wiſdom; but in that wonderful libration and expanſion of the firſt Earth over the face of the waters, ſuſtained by its own proportions, and the hand of his Providence.

Theſe two places in the Pſalms being duly conſider'd, we ſhall more eaſily underſtand a third place, to the ſame effect, in the *Proverbs*; delivered by *WISDOM*, concerning the Origin of the World, and the form of the firſt Earth, in theſe words, *Chap.* 8. 27. *When he prepared the Heavens I was there, when HE SET an Orb or Sphere upon the face of the Abyſs.* We render it, when we ſet a *Compaſs* upon the face of the Abyſs; but if we have rightly interpreted the Prophet *David*, 'tis plain enough what compaſs is here to be underſtood; not an imaginary circle, (for why ſhould that be thought one of the wonderful works of God) but that exterior Orb of the Earth that was ſet upon the waters. That was the Maſter-piece of the Divine art in framing of the firſt Earth, and therefore very fit to be taken notice of by *Wiſdom*. And upon this occaſion, I deſire you to reflect upon St. *Peter*'s expreſſion, concerning the firſt Earth, and to compare it with *Solomon*'s, to ſee if they do not anſwer one another. St. *Peter* calls it γῆν ϰαθεϛῶσα διὰ ὕδατων, *An Earth conſiſting, ſtanding,* or *ſuſtained by the waters.* And *Solomon* calls it חוג עַל פְּנֵי תְהוֹם. *An Orb drawn upon the face of the Abyſs.* And St. *Peter* ſays, that was done τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ by the *wiſdom of God:* which is the ſame Λόγος or *wiſdom,* that here declares her ſelf, to have been preſent at this work. Add now to theſe two places, the two foremention'd out of the Pſalmiſt; *An Earth founded upon the Seas,* (Pſal. 24. 2.) and an *Earth ſtretched out above the waters:* (*Pſal.* 136. 6.) Can any body doubt or queſtion, but all theſe four Texts refer to the ſame thing? And ſeeing St. *Peter*'s deſcription refers certainly to the Ante-diluvian Earth, they muſt all

refer to it; and do all as certainly and evidently agree with our Theory concerning the form and ſituation of it.

The pendulous form and poſture of that firſt Earth being prov'd from theſe four places, 'tis more eaſie and emphatical to interpret in this ſence that paſſage in *Job ch.* 26. 7. *He ſtretcheth out the North over the Tohu,* (for ſo it is in the original) *and hangeth the Earth upon nothing.* And this ſtrange foundation or no foundation of the exteriour Earth ſeems to be the ground of thoſe noble queſtions propos'd to *Job* by God Almighty, *ch.* 38. *Where waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare if thou haſt underſtanding. Whereupon are the foundations thereof faſtned, and who laid the corner ſtone?* There was neither foundation, nor corner ſtone, in that piece of Architecture; and that was it which made the art and wonder of it. But I have ſpoken more largely to theſe places in the Theory it ſelf. And if the four Texts before-mentioned be conſider'd without prejudice, I think there are few matters of natural Speculation that can be ſo well prov'd out of Scripture, as the Form which we have given to the Ante-diluvian Earth.

Book 1. *p.* 88.

But yet it may be thought a juſt, if not a neceſſary appendix to this diſcourſe, concerning the form of the ante-diluvian Earth, to give an account alſo of the *ante-diluvian Abyſs,* and the ſituation of it according to Scripture; for the relation which theſe two have to one another, will be a further means to diſcover if we have rightly determin'd the form of that Earth. The *Abyſs* or *Tehom-Rabbah* is a Scripture notion, and the word is not us'd, that I know of, in that diſtinct and peculiar ſence in Heathen Authors. 'Tis plain that in Scripture it is not always taken for the Sea (as *Gen.* 1. 2. & 7. 11. & 49. 25. *Deut.* 33. 13. *Job* 28. 14. & 38. 16. *Pſ.* 33. 7. & 71. 20. & 78. 15. & 135. 6. *Apoc.* 20. 1. 3.) but for ſome other maſs of waters, or ſubterraneous ſtorehouſe. And this being obſerv'd, we may eaſily diſcover the nature, and ſet down the hiſtory of the Scripture-Abyſs.

The

The Mother-Abyſs is no doubt that in the beginning of *Geneſis, ver.* 2. which had nothing but darkneſs upon the face of it, or a thick caliginous air. The next news we hear of this Abyſs is at the Deluge, (*Gen.* 7. 11.) where 'tis ſaid to be broke open, and the waters of it to have drowned the World. It ſeems then this Abyſs was clos'd up ſome time betwixt the Creation and the Deluge, and had got another cover than that of darkneſs. And if we will believe *Wiſdom*, (*Prov.* 8. 27.) who was there preſent at the formation of the Earth, an *Orb was ſet upon the face of the Abyſs* at the beginning of the World.

That theſe three places refer to the ſame Abyſs, I think, cannot be queſtioned by any that will compare them and conſider them. That of the Deluge, *Moſes* calls there *Tehom-Rabbah*, the *Great Abyſs*; and can there be any greater than the forementioned Mother-Abyſs? And *WISDOME*, in that place in the *Proverbs*, uſeth the ſame phraſe and words with *Moſes*, *Gen.* 1. 2. עַל פְּנֵי תְהוֹם *upon the face of the Deep* or of the *Abyſs*; changing *darkneſs* for that *Orb* of the exteriour Earth which was made afterwards to incloſe it. And in this vault it lay, and under this cover, when the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of it in theſe words (*Pſ.* 33. 7.) *He gathereth the waters of the Sea, as in a* * *bag; he layeth up the Abyſs in ſtorehouſes.* Laſtly, we may obſerve that 'twas this Mother-Abyſs whoſe womb was burſt at the Deluge, when the Sea was born, and broke forth as if it had iſſued out of a womb; as God expreſſeth it to *Job, ch.* 38. 8. in which place the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe reads it, when it broke forth, *coming out of the Abyſs.* Which diſruption at the Deluge ſeems alſo to be alluded to *Job* 12. 14, 15, and more plainly, *Prov.* 3. 20. *by his knowledge the Abyſſes are broken up.*

* *This reading or tranſlating is generally followed,* (Theor. book 1. p. 86.) *though the Engliſh tranſlation read* on a heap, *unſuitably to the matter and to the ſence.*

Thus you have already a threefold ſtate of the Abyſs, which makes a ſhort Hiſtory of it; firſt, *Open*, at the beginning; then *covered*, till the Deluge. Then *broke open* again, as it is at preſent. And we purſue the Hiſtory of it no further; but we are told, *Apoc.* 20. 3. That it ſhall be ſhut up again, and the great Dragon in it, for a Thouſand years. In the mean

time we may obſerve from this form and poſture of the Ante-diluvian Abyſs, how ſuitable it is and coherent with that form of the Ante-diluvian Earth which S. *Peter* and the *Pſalmiſt* had deſcrib'd, *ſuſtain'd by the waters*; *founded upon the waters*; *ſtretcht above the waters*; for if it was the cover of this Abyſs (and it had ſome cover that was broke at the Deluge) it was ſpread as a Cruſt or Ice upon the face of thoſe waters, and ſo made an *orbis Terrarum*, an habitable ſphere of Earth about the Abyſs.

SO much for the form of the Ante-diluvian Earth and Abyſs; which as they aptly correſpond to one another, ſo, you ſee, our Theory anſwers and is adjuſted to both; and, I think, ſo fitly, that we have no reaſon hitherto to be diſpleas'd with the ſucceſs we have had in the examination of it, according to Scripture. We have diſpatch'd the two main points in queſtion, firſt, to prove a diverſity in general betwixt the two natural Worlds, or betwixt the Heavens and the Earth before and after the Flood. Secondly, to prove wherein this diverſity conſiſted; or that the particular form of the Ante-diluvian Heavens and Earth was ſuch according to Scripture, as we have deſcrib'd it in the Theory. You'l ſay, then the work is done, what needs more, all the reſt follows of courſe; for if the Ante-diluvian Earth had ſuch a form as we have propos'd and prov'd it to have had, there could be no Deluge in it but by a diſſolution of its parts and exteriour frame: And a Deluge ſo made, would not be in the nature of a ſtanding Pool, but of a violent agitation and commotion of the waters. This is true; Theſe parts of the Theory are ſo cemented, that you muſt grant all, if you grant any. However we will try if even theſe two particulars alſo may be prov'd out of Scripture; That is, if there be any marks or memorandums left

there

there by the Spirit of God, of ſuch a fraction or diſſolution of the Earth at the Deluge. And alſo ſuch characters of the Deluge it ſelf, as ſhow it to have been by a fluctuation and impetuous commotion of the waters.

To proceed then; That there was a Fraction or Diſſolution of the Earth at the Deluge, the hiſtory of it by *Moſes* gives us the firſt account, ſeeing he tells us, as the principal cauſe of the Flood, that the Fountains of the *Great Abyſs* were *cloven* or *burſt aſunder*; and upon this diſruption the waters guſh'd out from the bowels of the Earth, as from the widen'd mouths of ſo many Fountains. I do not take *Fountains* there to ſignifie any more than Sources or Stores of Water; noting alſo this manner of their eruption from below, or out of the ground, as Fountains do. Accordingly in the *Proverbs*, (*chap.*3.20.) 'tis onely ſaid, the *Abyſſes were broken open.* I do not doubt but this refers to the Deluge, as *Bede*, and others underſtand it; the very word being us'd here, both in the *Hebrew* and Septuagint, that expreſs'd the diſruption of the Abyſs at the Deluge. נבקעו ἐῤῥάγησαν.

And this breaking up of the Earth at that time, is elegantly expreſt in *Job*, by the burſting of the Womb of Nature, when the Sea was firſt brought to light; when after many pangs and throes and dilacerations of her body, Nature was deliver'd of a burthen which ſhe had born in her Womb Sixteen Hundred Years. *c.* 38.

Theſe three places I take to be memorials and proofs of the diſruption of the Earth, or of the Abyſs, at the univerſal Deluge. And to theſe we may add more out of the Prophets, *Job*, and the *Pſalms*, by way of alluſion (commonly) to the ſtate of Nature at that time. The Prophet *Iſaiah* in deſcribing the future deſtruction of the World, *chap.* 24. 18,19. ſeems plainly to allude and have reſpect to the paſt deſtruction of it at the Deluge; as appears by that leading expreſſion, *the windows from an high are open*, אֲרֻבוֹת מִמָּרוֹם נִפְתָּחוּ, διοῖδες ἐκ τοῦ ὑψους ἠνεῴχθησαν, taken manifeſtly from *Gen.* 7. 11. Then ſee how the deſcription goes on, *the windows from an high are open, and*

the

the foundations of the Earth do ſhake. The Earth is utterly broken down, the Earth is quite diſſolv'd, the Earth is exceedingly moved. Here are Concuſſions, and Fractions, and Diſſolutions, as there were in the Mundane Earth-quake and Deluge; which we had expreſt before only by *breaking open the Abyſs.* By the Foundations of the Earth here and elſewhere, I perceive many underſtand the Centre; ſo by *moving* or *ſhaking* the foundations, or putting them out of courſe, muſt be underſtood a diſplacing of the Centre; which was really done at the Deluge, as we have ſhewn in its proper place. If we therefore remember that there was both a diſlocation, as I may ſo ſay; and a fraction in the body of the Earth, by that great fall; a diſlocation as to the centre, and a fraction as to the ſurface and exterior region, it will truly anſwer to all thoſe expreſſions in the Prophet, that ſeem ſo ſtrange and extraordinary. 'Tis true, this place of the Prophet reſpects alſo and foretells the future deſtruction of the World; but that being by Fire, when the *Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with the works therein ſhall be burnt up,* theſe expreſſions of *fractions and concuſſions,* ſeem to be taken originally from the manner of the World's firſt deſtruction, and to be transferr'd, by way of application, to repreſent and ſignifie the ſecond deſtruction of it, though, it may be, not with the ſame exactneſs and propriety.

Theor. book 2. p. 194, 195.

There are ſeveral other places that refer to the diſſolution and ſubverſion of the Earth at the Deluge: *Amos 9. 5, 6. The Lord of Hoſts is he that toucheth the Earth, and it ſhall melt, or be diſſolv'd.------ and it ſhall riſe up wholly like a Flood, and ſhall be drowned as by the Flood of Ægypt.* By *this* and by *the next Verſe* the Prophet ſeems to allude to the Deluge, and to the diſſolution of the Earth that was then. This in *Job* ſeems to be call'd *breaking down the Earth, and overturning the Earth,* Chap. 12. 14, 15. *Behold he breaketh down and it cannot be built again, He ſhutteth upon man, and there can be no opening. Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; alſo he ſendeth them out, and they overturn the Earth*: Which place you may ſee paraphras'd,

phras'd, *Theor. Book* 1. *p.* 91, 92. We have already cited, and ſhall hereafter cite, other places out of *Job*; And as that Ancient Author (who is thought to have liv'd before the Judaical Oeconomy, and nearer to *Noah* than *Moſes*) ſeems to have had the *Præcepta Noachidarum*, ſo alſo he ſeems to have had the *Dogmata Noachidarum*; which were deliver'd by *Noah* to his Children and Poſterity, concerning the myſteries of natural Providence, the origine and fate of the World, the Deluge and Ante-diluvian ſtate, *&c.* and accordingly we find many ſtrictures of theſe doctrines in the Book of *Job*. Laſtly, in the Pſalms there are Texts that mention the *ſhaking of the Earth*, and the *foundations* of the World, in reference to the Flood, if we judge aright; whereof we will ſpeak under the next Head, *concerning* the raging of the Waters in the Deluge.

Theſe places of Scripture may be noted, as left us to be remembrancers of that general ruine and diſruption of the Earth at the time of the Deluge. But I know it will be ſaid of them, that they are not ſtrict proofs, but alluſions onely. Be it ſo; yet what is the ground of thoſe alluſions? ſomething muſt be alluded to, and ſomething that hath paſt in nature, and that is recorded in Sacred Hiſtory; And what is that, unleſs it be the univerſal Deluge, and that change and diſturbance that was then in all nature. If others ſay, that theſe and ſuch like places are to be underſtood morally and allegorically, I do not envy them their interpretation; but when nature and reaſon will bear a literal ſence, the rule is, that we ſhould not recede from the letter. But I leave theſe things to every one's thoughts; which the more calm they are, and the more impartial, the more eaſily they will feel the impreſſions of truth. In the mean time, I proceed to the laſt particular mention'd, *The form of the Deluge it ſelf.*

This we ſuppoſe to have been not in the way of a ſtanding Pool, the Waters making an equal Surface, and an equal heighth every where; but that the extreme heighth of the Waters was made by the extreme agitation of them; caus'd by the weight and force of great

great Maſſes or Regions of Earth falling at once into the Abyſs; by which means, as the waters in ſome places were preſt out,and thrown at an exceſſive height into the air, ſo they would alſo in certain places gape, and lay bare even the bottom of the Abyſs; which would look as an open Grave ready to ſwallow up the Earth, and all it bore. Whilſt the Ark, in the mean time,falling and riſing by theſe gulphs and precipices, ſometimes above water, and ſometimes under, was a true Type of the ſtate of the Church in this World; And to this time and ſtate *David* alludes in the name of the Church, *Pſal.* 42. 7. *Abyſs calls unto Abyſs at the noiſe of thy Cataracts or Water-ſpouts; All thy waves and billows have gone over me.* And again, *Pſal.* 46. 2, 3. in the name of the Church, *Therefore will not we fear, tho' the Earth be removed,and tho' the mountains be carried into the midſt of the Seas. The waters thereof roar and are troubled, the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof.*

But there is no deſcription more remarkable or more eloquent, than of that Scene of things repreſented, *Pſal.* 18. 7,8,9, *&c.* which ſtill alludes, in my opinion, to the Deluge-ſcene, and in the name of the Church. We will ſet down the words at large.

Ver. 6. *In my diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God; He heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him into his ears.*

7. *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations alſo of the hills moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth.*

8. *There went up a ſmoke from his noſtrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it.*

9. *He bowed the Heavens alſo and came down,and darkneſs was under his feet.*

10. *And he rode upon a Cherub and did flie, he did flie upon the wings of the wind.*

11. *He made darkneſs his ſecret place; his pavilion round about him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skie.*

12. *At the brightneſs before him the thick clouds paſſed, hail and coals of fire.*

13. *The Lord alſo thunder'd in the Heavens, and the Higheſt*

Higheſt gave his voice, hail and coals of fire.

14. *Yea, he ſent out his arrows, and ſcatter'd them: and he ſhot out lightnings and diſcomfited them.*

15. *Then the Chanels of waters were ſeen, and the foundations of the World were diſcovered; at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blaſt of the breath of thy noſtrils.*

He ſent from above, he took me; he drew me out of great waters. מַיִם רַבִּים

This I think is a rough * draught of the face of the Heavens and the Earth at the Deluge, as the laſt Verſes do intimate; and 'tis apply'd to expreſs the dangers and deliverances of the Church: The Expreſſions are far too high to be apply'd to *David* in his Perſon, and to his deliverance from *Saul*; no ſuch agonies or diſorders of nature as are here inſtanc'd in, were made in *David*'s time, or upon his account; but 'tis a ſcheme of the Church, and of her fate, particularly, as repreſented by the Ark, in that diſmal diſtreſs, when all nature was in confuſion. And though there may be ſome things here intermixt to make up the Scene, that are not ſo cloſe to the ſubject as the reſt, or that may be referr'd to the future deſtruction of the world: yet that is not unuſual, nor amiſs, in ſuch deſcriptions, if the great ſtrokes be fit and rightly plac'd. That there was ſmoke, and fire, and water, and thunder, and darkneſs, and winds, and Earth-quakes at the Deluge, we cannot doubt, if we conſider the circumſtances of it; Waters daſh'd and broken make a ſmoke and darkneſs, and no Hurricano could be ſo violent as the motions of the Air at that time; Then the Earth was torn in pieces, and its Foundations ſhaken; And as to thunder and lightning, the encounters and colliſions of the mighty Waves, and the cracks of a falling World, would make flaſhes and noiſes, far greater and more terrible, than any that can come from vapors and clouds. There was an univerſal Tempeſt, a conflict and claſhing of all the Elements; and *David* ſeems to have repreſented it ſo; with God Almighty in the midſt of it, ruling them all.

* See *Philo Judæus* his deſcription of the Deluge, both as to the commotions of the Heavens, and the fractions of the Earth. In his firſt Treatiſe de *Abrahamo*, mihi *pa.* 279.

But I am apt to think ſome will ſay, all this is Poetical in the Prophet, and theſe are hyperbolical and figurate expreſſions, from which we cannot make any inference, as to the Deluge and the natural World. 'Tis true, thoſe that have no Idea of the Deluge, that will anſwer to ſuch a Scene of things, as is here repreſented, muſt give ſuch a ſlight account of this Pſalm. But on the other hand, if we have already an Idea of the Deluge that is rational, and alſo conſonant to Scripture upon other proofs, and the deſcription here made by the Prophet anſwer to that Idea, whether then is it not more reaſonable to think that it ſtands upon that ground, than to think it a meer fancy and Poetical Scene of things: This is the true ſtate of the caſe, and that which we muſt judge of. Methinks 'tis very harſh to ſuppoſe all this a bare fiction, grounded upon no matter of fact, upon no Sacred ſtory, upon no appearance of God in nature. If you ſay it hath a moral ſignification, ſo let it have, we do not deſtroy that; it hath reference, no doubt, to the dangers and deliverances of the Church; but the queſtion is, whether the words and natural ſence be a fancy onely, a bundle of randome hyperboles: or whether they relate to the hiſtory of the Deluge, and the ſtate of the Ark there repreſenting the Church. This makes the ſence doubly rich, hiſtorically and morally; and grounds it upon Scripture and reaſon, as well as upon fancy.

That violent eruption of the Sea out of the Womb of the Earth, which *Job* ſpeaks of, is, in my judgment, another deſcription of the Deluge; 'tis *Chap.* 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Who ſhut up the Sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had iſſued out of a Womb; When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkneſs a ſwadling band for it. And broke up for it my decreed place------ hitherto ſhalt thou come, &c.* Here you ſee the birth and nativity of the Sea, or of *Oceanus*, deſcrib'd *; how he broke out of the Womb, and what his firſt garment and ſwadling cloaths were; namely clouds

* *Ultì comparatio præcedens* || *de ortu Telluris, ſumitur ab ædificio, ita hæc altera de ortu maris, ſumitur à partu; & exhibetur Oceanus, primùm, ut fœtus incluſus in utero, dein ut erumpens & prodeuns, denique ut faſciis & primis ſuis pannis involutus. Atque ex aperto Terræ utero prorupit aquarum moles, ut proluvies illa, quam ſimul cum fœtu profundere ſolet puerpera.* || Ver. 4, 5, 6.

and

and thick darkneſs. This cannot refer to any thing, that I know of, but to the face of Nature at the Deluge; when the Sea was born, and wrapt up in clouds and broken waves, and a dark impenetrable miſt round the body of the Earth. And this ſeems to be the very ſame that *David* had expreſt in his deſcription of the Deluge, *Pſal.* 18. 11. *He made darkneſs his ſecret place, his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.* For this was truly the face of the World in the time of the Flood, tho' we little reflect upon it. And this dark confuſion every where, above and below, aroſe from the violent and confus'd motion of the Abyſs; which was daſht in pieces by the falling Earth, and flew into the air in miſty drops, as duſt flies up in a great ruine. *See* Theor. *Book* 1. *p.* 99.

But I am afraid, we have ſtayed too long upon this particular, *the form of the Deluge*; ſeeing 'tis but a Corollary from the precedent article about the diſſolution of the Earth. However time is not ill ſpent about any thing that relates to natural Providence, whereof the two moſt ſignal inſtances in our Sacred Writings, are, the *Deluge* and the *Conflagration.* And ſeeing *Job* and *David* do often reflect upon the works of God in the external creation, and upon the adminiſtrations of Providence, it cannot be imagin'd that they ſhould never reflect upon the Deluge; the moſt remarkable change of Nature that ever hath been, and the moſt remarkable judgment upon mankind. And if they have reflected upon it any where, 'tis, I think, in thoſe places and thoſe inſtances which I have noted; and if thoſe places do relate to the Deluge, they are not capable, in my judgment, of any fairer or more natural interpretation than that which we have given them; which, you ſee, how much it favours and confirms our Theory.

I have now finiſht the heads I undertook to prove, that I might ſhew our Theory to agree with Scripture in theſe three principal points; firſt, in that it ſuppoſeth a diverſity and difference betwixt the Antediluvian Heavens and Earth, and the preſent Heavens and Earth. Secondly, in aſſigning the particular

form of the Ante-diluvian Earth and Abyſs. Thirdly, in explaining the Deluge by a diſſolution of that Earth, and an eruption of the Abyſs. How far I have ſucceeded in this attempt, as to others, I cannot tell; but I am ſure I have convinc'd my ſelf, and am ſatisfied that my thoughts, in that Theory, have run in the ſame tract with the holy writings: with the true intent and ſpirit of them. There are ſome perſons that are wilfully ignorant in certain things, and others that are willing to be ignorant as the Apoſtle phraſeth it; ſpeaking of thoſe Eternaliſts that denyed the doctrine of the change and revolutions of the Natural World: And 'tis not to be expected but there are many ſtill of the ſame humour; and therefore may be called *willingly ignorant*, that is, they will not uſe that pains and attention that is neceſſary for the examination of ſuch a doctrine, nor impartiality in judging after examination; they greedily lay hold on all evidence on one ſide, and willingly forget, or ſlightly paſs over, all evidence for the other; this I think is the character of thoſe that are *willingly ignorant*; for I do not take it to be ſo deep as a down-right wilful ignorance, where they are plainly conſcious to themſelves of that wilfulneſs; but where an inſenſible mixture of humane paſſions inclines them one way, and makes them averſe to the other; and in that method draws on all the conſequences of a willing *ignorance*.

There remains ſtill, as I remember, one Propoſition that I am bound to make good; I ſaid at firſt, that our Hypotheſis concerning the Deluge was more agreeable not only to Scripture in general, but alſo to the particular Hiſtory of the Flood left us by *Moſes*; I ſay, more agreeable to it than any other Hypotheſis that hath yet been propos'd. This may be made good in a few words. For in *Moſes*'s hiſtory of the Deluge there are two principal points, The extent of the Deluge, and the Cauſes of it; and in both theſe we do fully agree with that ſacred Author. *As to the extent of it*, He makes the Deluge univerſal; *All the high hills under the whole heaven were cover'd, fifteen cubits upwards*; We alſo make it univerſal,

over

over the face of the whole Earth; and in ſuch a manner as muſt needs raiſe the waters above the top of the higheſt hills every where. As *to the cauſes of it*, *Moſes* makes them to be the diſruption of the *Abyſs*, and the *Rains*; and no more; and in this alſo we exactly agree with him; we know no other cauſes, nor pretend to any other but thoſe two. Diſtinguiſhing therefore *Moſes* his narration as to the ſubſtance and circumſtances of it, it muſt be allowed that theſe two points make the ſubſtance of it, and that an Hypotheſis that differs from it in either of theſe two, differs from it more than Ours; which, at the worſt, can but differ in matter of circumſtance. Now ſeeing the great difficulty about the Deluge is the quantity of Water required for it, there have been two explications propoſed, beſides ours, to remove or ſatisfie this difficulty; One whereof makes the Deluge not to have been univerſal, or to have reacht only *Judea* and ſome neighbouring Countreys; and therefore leſs water would ſuffice; The other owning the Deluge to be univerſal, ſupplies it ſelf with Water from the Divine Omnipotency, and ſays *new* Waters were created then for the nonce, and again annihilated when the Deluge was to ceaſe. Both theſe explications you ſee, (and I know no more of note that are not obnoxious to the ſame exceptions) differ from *Moſes* in the ſubſtance, or in one of the two ſubſtantial points, and conſequently more than ours doth. The firſt changeth the Flood into a kind of national innundation, and the ſecond aſſigns other cauſes of it than *Moſes* had aſſigned. And as they both differ apparently from the Moſaical hiſtory, ſo you may ſee them refuted upon other grounds alſo, in the third Chapter of the Firſt Book of the Theory.

This may be ſufficient as to the Hiſtory of the Flood by *Moſes*. But poſſibly it may be ſaid the principal objection will ariſe from *Moſes* his Six-days Creation in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*: where another ſort of Earth, than what we have form'd from the Chaos, is repreſented to us; namely, a Terraqueous Globe, ſuch as our Earth is at preſent. 'Tis indeed very apparent, that *Moſes* hath accommodated his

his Six-days Creation to the preſent form of the Earth, or to that which was before the eyes of the people when he writ. But it is a great queſtion whether that was ever intended for a true Phyſical account of the origine of the Earth: or whether *Moſes* did either Philoſophize or Aſtronomize in that deſcription. The ancient Fathers, when they anſwer the Heathens, and the adverſaries of Chriſtianity, do generally deny it; as I am ready to make good upon another occaſion. And the thing it ſelf bears in it evident marks of an accommodation and condeſcention to the vulgar notions concerning the form of the World. Thoſe that think otherwiſe, and would make it literally and phyſically true in all the parts of it, I deſire them, without entring upon the ſtrict merits of the cauſe, to determine theſe Preliminaries. Firſt, whether the whole univerſe riſe from a Terreſtrial Chaos. Secondly, what Syſteme of the World this Six-days Creation proceeds upon: whether it ſuppoſes the Earth, or the Sun, for the Center. Thirdly, Whether the Sun and Fixt Stars are of a later date, and a later birth, than this Globe of Earth. And laſtly, Where is the Region of the Super-celeſtial Waters. When they have determin'd theſe Fundamentals, we will proceed to other obſervations upon the Six-days work, which will further aſſure us, that 'tis a narration ſuited to the capacity of the people, and not to the ſtrict and phyſical nature of things. Beſides, we are to remember, that *Moſes* muſt be ſo interpreted in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, as not to interfere with himſelf in other parts of his Hiſtory; nor to interfere with S. *Peter*, or the Prophet *David*, or any other Sacred Authors, when they treat of the ſame matter. Nor laſtly, ſo, as to be repugnant to clear and unconteſted Science. For, in things that concern the natural World, that muſt always be conſulted.

With theſe precautions, let them try if they can reduce that narrative of the Origine of the World, to phyſical truth; ſo as to be conſiſtent, both with Nature, and with Divine Revelation every where. It is eaſily reconcileable to both, if we ſuppoſe it

writ

writ in a Vulgar ſtyle, and to the conceptions of the People: And we cannot deny that a Vulgar ſtyle is often made uſe of in the holy Writings. How freely and unconcernedly does Scripture ſpeak of God Almighty, according to the opinions of the vulgar? of his *paſſions, local motions, parts and members of his body.* Which all are things that do not belong, or are not compatible with the Divine nature, according to truth and Science. And if this liberty be taken, as to God himſelf, much more may it be taken as to his works. And accordingly we ſee, what motion the Scripture gives to the Sun: what figure to the Earth: what figure to the Heavens: All according to the appearance of ſence and popular credulity; without any remorſe for having tranſgreſſed the rules of intellectual truth.

This vulgar ſtyle of Scripture in deſcribing the natures of things, hath been often miſtaken for the real ſence, and ſo become a ſtumbling block in the way of truth. Thus the *Anthropomorphites* of old contended for the humane ſhape of God, from the Letter of Scripture; and brought many expreſs Texts for their purpoſe: but found reaſon, at length, got the upper hand of Literal authority. Then, ſeveral of the Chriſtian Fathers contended, that there were no *Antipodes:* and made that doctrine irreconcileable to Scripture. But this alſo, after a while, went off, and yielded to reaſon and experience. Then, the Motion of the Earth muſt by no means be allow'd, as being contrary to Scripture: for ſo it is indeed, according to the Letter and Vulgar ſtyle. But all intelligent Perſons ſee thorough this argument, and depend upon it no more in this caſe, than in the former. Laſtly, The original of the Earth from a Chaos, drawn according to the rules of Phyſiology, will not be admitted: becauſe it does not agree with the Scheme of the Six-days Creation. But why may not this be writ in a Vulgar ſtyle, as well as the reſt? Certainly there can be nothing more like a Vulgar ſtyle, than to ſet God to *work by the day*, and in Six-days to finiſh his task: as he is there repreſented. We may therefore probably hope that all theſe diſguiſes of truth will at length fall

off,

off, and that we ſhall ſee God and his Works in a pure and naked Light.

Thus I have finiſh'd what I had to ſay in confirmation of this Theory from Scripture. I mean of the former part of it, which depends chiefly upon the Deluge, and the Antediluvian Earth. When you have collated the places of Scripture, on either ſide, and laid them in the balance, to be weigh'd one againſt another; If you do but find them equal, or near to an equal poiſe, you know in whether Scale the Natural Reaſons are to be laid: and of what weight they ought to be in an argument of this kind. There is a great difference betwixt Scripture with Philoſophy on its ſide, and Scripture with Philoſophy againſt it: when the queſtion is concerning the Natural World. And this is our Caſe: which I leave now to the conſideration of the unprejudic'd Reader: and proceed to the Proof of the Second Part of the Theory.

THE later Part conſiſts of the *Conflagration of the World*, and the *New Heavens* and *New Earth*. And ſeeing there is no diſpute concerning the former of theſe two, our task will now lie in a little compaſs. Being onely this, To prove that there will be New Heavens, and a New Earth, after the Conflagration. This, to my mind, is ſufficiently done already, in the firſt, ſecond and third Chapters of the 4*th*. Book, both from Scripture and Antiquity, whether Sacred or prophane: and therefore, at preſent, we will onely make a ſhort and eaſie review of Scripture-Teſtimonies, with deſign chiefly to obviate and diſappoint the evaſions of ſuch, as would beat down ſolid Texts into thin Metaphors and Allegories.

The Teſtimonies of Scripture concerning the *Renovation of the World*, are either expreſs, or implicit. Thoſe I call expreſs, that mention the New Heavens and

and New Earth: And thoſe implicit, that ſignifie the ſame thing, but not in expreſs terms. So when our Saviour ſpeaks of a *Palingeneſia*, or Regeneration, (*Matt.* 19. 28, 29.) Or St. *Peter* of an *Apocataſtaſis* or Reſtitution, (*Act.* 3. 21.) Theſe being words us'd by all Authors, prophane or Eccleſiaſtical, for the *Renovation* of the World, ought, in reaſon, to be interpreted in the ſame ſence in the holy Writings. And in like manner, when St. *Paul* ſpeaks of his *Future Earth*, or an *habitable World to come*, Hebr. 2. 5. or of a *Redemption* or melioration of the preſent ſtate of nature, *Rom.* 8. 21, 22. Theſe lead us again, in other terms, to the ſame *Renovation* of the World. But there are alſo ſome places of Scripture, that ſet the *New Heavens* and *New Earth* in ſuch a full and open view, that we muſt ſhut our eyes not to ſee them. St. *John* ſays, he ſaw them, and obſerv'd the form of the New Earth, *Apoc.* 21. 1. The Seer *Iſaiah* ſpoke of them in expreſs words, many hundred years before. And St. *Peter* marks the time when they are to be introduc'd, namely after the Conflagration, or after the Diſſolution of the preſent Heavens and Earth: 2 *Pet.* 3. 12, 13.

ἡ οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα. *Iſa.* 65. 17.

Theſe later Texts of Scripture, being ſo expreſs, there is but one way left to elude the force of them; and that is, by turning the *Renovation of the World* into an Allegory: and making the New Heavens and New Earth to be Allegorical Heavens and Earth, not real and material, as ours are. This is a bold attempt of ſome modern Authors, who chuſe rather to ſtrain the Word of God, than their own notions. There are Allegories, no doubt, in Scripture, but we are not to allegorize Scripture without ſome warrant: either from an Apoſtolical interpretation, or from the neceſſity of the matter: and I do not know how they can pretend to either of theſe, in this caſe. However, that they may have all fair play, we will lay aſide, at preſent, all the other Texts of Scripture, and confine our ſelves wholly to St. *Peter*'s words: to ſee and examine whether they are, or can be turn'd into an Allegory, according to the beſt rules of interpretation.

2 *Pet.* 3. 11, 12, 13.

St. *Peter's* words are theſe: *Seeing then all theſe things ſhall be diſſolv'd, what manner of perſons ought ye to be, in holy converſation and godlineſs? Looking for, and haſting the coming of the Day of God: wherein the Heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolv'd, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat. NEVERTHELESS, we, according to his promiſe, look for New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein Righteouſneſs ſhall dwell.* The Queſtion is concerning this laſt Verſe, *Whether the New Heavens and Earth* here promis'd, are to be real and material Heavens and Earth, or onely figurative and allegorical. The words, you ſee, are clear: And the general rule of interpretation is this, *That* we are not to recede from the letter, or the literal ſence, unleſs there be a neceſſity from the ſubject matter; ſuch a neceſſity, as makes a literal interpretation abſurd. But where is that neceſſity in this Caſe? Cannot God make new Heavens and a new Earth, as eaſily as he made the Old ones? Is his ſtrength decay'd ſince that time, or is Matter grown more diſobedient? Nay, does not Nature offer her ſelf voluntarily to raiſe a new World from the ſecond Chaos, as well as from the firſt: and, under the conduct of Providence, to make it as convenient an habitation as the Primæval Earth? Therefore no neceſſity can be pretended of leaving the literal ſence, upon an incapacity of the ſubject matter.

The ſecond rule to determine an Interpretation to be Literal or Allegorical, is, the uſe of the ſame words or phraſe in the Context, and the ſignification of them there. Let's then examine our caſe according to this rule. St. *Peter* had us'd the ſame phraſe of *Heavens and Earth* twice before in the ſame Chapter. The *old Heavens and Earth, ver.* 5. The *preſent Heavens and Earth, ver.* 7. and now he uſes it again, *ver.* 13. The *new Heavens and Earth.* Have we not then reaſon to ſuppoſe, that he takes it here in the ſame ſence, that he had done twice before, for real and material Heavens and Earth? There is no mark ſet of a new ſignification, nor why we ſhould alter the ſence of the words. That he us'd them always before for the material Heavens and Earth, I think none will queſtion:

and

and therefore, unleſs they can give us a ſufficient reaſon, why we ſhould change the ſignification of the words, we are bound, by this ſecond rule alſo, to underſtand them in a literal ſence.

Laſtly, The very form of the words, and the manner of their dependance upon the Context, leads us to a literal ſence, and to material Heavens and Earth. *NEVERTHELESS*, ſays the Apoſtle, *we expect new Heavens*, &c. Why *Nevertheleſs!* that is, notwithſtanding the diſſolution of the preſent Heavens and Earth. The Apoſtle foreſaw, what he had ſaid, might raiſe a doubt in their minds, whether all things would not be at an end: Nothing more of Heavens and Earth, or of any habitable World, after the Conflagration; and to obviate this, he tells them, *Notwithſtanding* that wonderful deſolation that I have deſcrib'd, we do, according to God's promiſes, expect new Heavens and a new Earth, to be an Habitation for the Righteous.

You ſee then the New Heavens and New Earth, which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, are ſubſtituted in the place of thoſe that were deſtroy'd at the Conflagration; and would you ſubſtitute Allegorical Heavens and Earth in the place of Material? A ſhadow for a ſubſtance? What an Equivocation would it be in the Apoſtle, when the doubt was about the material Heavens and Earth, to make an anſwer about Allegorical. Laſtly, the timeing of the thing determines the ſence. When ſhall this new World appear? after the Conflagration, the Apoſtle ſays: Therefore it cannot be underſtood of any moral renovation, to be made at, or in the times of the Goſpel, as theſe Allegoriſts pretend. We muſt therefore, upon all accounts, conclude, that the Apoſtle intended a literal ſence: real and material Heavens, to ſucceed theſe after the Conflagration: which was the thing to be prov'd. And I know not what Bars the Spirit of God can ſet, to keep us within the Compaſs of a Literal ſence, if theſe be not ſufficient.

Thus much for the Explication of St. *Peter's* Doctrine, concerning the new Heavens and new Earth: which ſecures the ſecond Part of our Theory. For the

Theory ſtands upon two Pillars, or two pedeſtals, The Ante-diluvian Earth and the Future Earth: or, in S.*Peter*'s phraſe, The Old Heavens and Earth, and the New Heavens and Earth: And it cannot be ſhaken, ſo long as theſe two continue firm and immoveable. We might now put an end to this Review, but it may be expected poſſibly that we ſhould ſay ſomething concerning the *Millennium:* which we have, contrary to the general Sentiment of the modern *Millenaries*, plac'd in the *Future* Earth. Our opinion hath this advantage above others, that, all fanatical pretenſions to power and empire in this World, are, by theſe means, blown away, as chaff before the wind. Princes need not fear to be dethron'd, to make way to the Saints: nor Governments unhing'd, that They may rule the World with a rod of Iron. Theſe are the effects of a wild Enthuſiaſm; ſeeing the very ſtate which they aim at, is not to be upon this Earth.

But that our ſence may not be miſtaken or miſapprehended in this particular, as if we thought the Chriſtian Church would never, upon this Earth, be in a better and happier poſture than it is in at preſent: We muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt a *melioration* of the World, if you will allow that word: and a *millennium.* We do not deny a reformation and improvement of the Church, both as to Peace, Purity, and Piety. That knowledge may increaſe, mens minds be enlarg'd, and Chriſtian Religion better underſtood: That the power of Antichriſt ſhall be diminiſh'd, perſecution ceaſe, and a greater union and harmony eſtabliſh'd amongſt the Reformed. All this may be, and I hope will be, ere long. But the *Apocalyptical Millennium*, or the *New Jeruſalem*, is ſtill another matter. It differs not in degree only from the preſent ſtate, but is a new order of things: both in the Moral World and in the Natural; and that cannot be till we come into the *New Heavens* and *New Earth.* Suppoſe what Reformation you can in this World, there will ſtill remain many things inconſiſtent with the true Millennial ſtate. Antichriſt, tho' weakned, will not be finally deſtroy'd till the coming of our Saviour, nor Satan bound. And there

will

will be always poverty, wars, diſeaſes, knaves and hypocrites, in this World: which are not conſiſtent with the *New Jeruſalem*, as S. *John* deſcribes it. *Apoc.* 21. 2, 3, 4, &c.

You ſee now what our notion is of the Millennium, as we deny this Earth to be the Seat of it. 'Tis the ſtate that ſucceeds the firſt Reſurrection, when Satan is lockt up in the bottomleſs pit. The ſtate when the Martyrs are to return into Life, and wherein they are to have the firſt lot and chief ſhare. A ſtate which is to laſt a thouſand years. *And Bleſſed and Holy is he, that hath a part in it: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, but they ſhall be Prieſts of God and Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand years.* If you would ſee more particular reaſons of our judgment in this caſe, why ſuch a Millennium is not to be expected in this World: they are ſet down in the 8*th* Chap. of the 4*th* Book, and we do not think it neceſſary that they ſhould be here repeated.

As to that diſſertation that follows the Millennium, and reaches to the Conſummation of all things, ſeeing it is but problematical, we leave it to ſtand or fall by the evidence already given. And ſhould be very glad to ſee the conjectures of others, more learned, in Speculations ſo abſtruſe and remote from common knowledge. They cannot ſurely be thought unworthy or unfit for our Meditations, ſeeing they are ſuggeſted to us by Scripture it ſelf. And to what end were they propos'd to us there, if it was not intended that they ſhould be underſtood, ſooner or later?

I have done with this Review: and ſhall only add one or two reflections upon the whole diſcourſe, and ſo conclude. You have ſeen the ſtate of the Theory of the Earth, as to the *Matter*, *Form*, and *Proofs* of it: both Natural and Sacred. If any one will ſubſtitute a better in its place, I ſhall think my ſelf more obliged to him, than if he had ſhew'd me the Quadrature of the Circle. But it is not enough to pick quarrels here and there: that may be done by any writing, eſpecial when it is of ſo great extent and comprehenſion. They muſt build up, as well as pull

down;

down; and give us another Theory inſtead of this, fitted to the ſame natural Hiſtory of the Earth, according as it is ſet down in Scripture: and then let the World take their choice. He that cuts down a Tree, is bound in reaſon to plant two, becauſe there is an hazard in their growth and thriving.

Then as to thoſe that are ſuch rigorous Scripturiſts, as to require plainly demonſtrative and irreſiſtible Texts for every thing they entertain or believe; They would do well to reflect and conſider, whether, for every article in the three Creeds (which have no ſupport from natural reaſon) they can bring ſuch Texts of Scripture as they require of others: or a fairer and juſter evidence, all things conſider'd, than we have done for the ſubſtance of this Theory. We have not indeed ſaid all that might be ſaid, as to Antiquity: that making no part in this Review, and being capable ſtill of great additions. But as to Scripture and Reaſon I have no more to add. Thoſe that are not ſatisfied with the proofs already produc'd upon theſe two heads, are under a fate, good or bad, which is not in my power to overcome.

F I N I S.

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